


**Female Archetypes in the
Barzaz Breiz and the influence of
Théodore Hersart de la Villemarqué's
editing on the portrayal of women**

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Summary

This paper identifies different types of female characters (young girl, daughter, sister, sweetheart, fiancée, wife, mother, stepmother, widow, female saint) featured in the *Barzañ Breiz* and the connected themes (religion, beauty, violence), examining patterns in characterization. Part Two of this paper includes three case studies of song texts from the *Barzañ Breiz* (*Loiḡa hag Abalard*, *Ar Plac'h Dimeḡet Gand Satan*, *Ar Breur Mager*), comparing them to different versions from other collections and discussing Théodore Hersart de la Villemarqué's editorial practices and their influence on the portrayal of women.

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List of Abbreviations

Breton Ballads	Constantine, Mary-Ann. <i>Breton Ballads</i> . Aberystwyth: CMCS Publications, 1996.
BB	Hersart de la Villemarqué, Théodore. <i>Barzaz Breiz</i> = <i>Chants populaires de la Bretagne</i> , 8 th rep. Paris: Didier, 1883.
Aux Sources	Laurent, Donatien. <i>Aux Sources du Barzaz-Breiz: La mémoire d'un peuple</i> . Douarnenez: ArMen, 1989.
GBI1	Luzel, François-Marie. <i>Gwerziou Breiz-Izel</i> . Vol. 1. Lorient: É. Corffmat, 1868.
GBI2	Luzel, François-Marie. <i>Gwerziou Breiz-Izel</i> . Vol. 2. Lorient: É. Corffmat, 1874.
PW	Penguern, Jean-Marie. <i>Dastumad Penneven</i> . Rennes: Dastum, 1983.
AB	Pérennès, Henri. “Chansons populaires de la Basse-Bretagne”. <i>Annales de Bretagne</i> vol. 45 (1938). pp. 40-71, 212-257.

Introduction

The *Barzañ Breiz* is a collection of traditional Breton songs put together by Théodore-Claude-Henri Hersart de la Villemarqué (also known under his bardic name Hersart Kervarker). This well-known and much-discussed work played a large part in helping to form Breton identity during the Romantic era and beyond. It was first published in 1839 as a Breton-French bilingual work with the author's introductions in French discussing the background of each song. The second edition in 1845 presented a number of new song texts and put larger emphasis on narratives stressing Breton identity. The third major edition published in 1867 introduced more new song texts as well as a change to the format. It presents the French translations first and in a large font, while the Breton texts were moved to the footnotes. It contains 85 songs of various lengths and covers a variety of themes ranging from the legendary history of the Breton peoples to love and religion. They are divided into *gwerzioù* 'ballads', *sonioù* 'songs about love' and *kanoù relijiel* 'religious songs'.

A brief note on naming conventions is in order here. Théodore-Claude-Henri Hersart de la Villemarqué has been called by many names. Francis Gourvil uses "Hersart" and "La Villemarqué" interchangeably in his 1959 thesis¹, which also seems to be the case with earlier academics.² In recent times, the usage has shifted towards either "Villemarqué" or "La Villemarqué" or, on rare occasions, "de la Villemarqué", with his name being usually sorted under the letter L. This is currently the generally accepted naming convention. However, I have made the decision to return to calling the collector of the *Barzañ Breiz* "Hersart". Names with this particular structure are common among the noble names used in Brittany, although they are also used in French France. They work a little counter-intuitively in that the family name is then followed by a branch name, meaning that the

¹ Théodore-Claude-Henri Hersart de La Villemarqué (1815–1895) et le *Barzañ-Breiz* (1839-1845-1867). *Origines, Editions, Sources, Critique, Influences*, Imprimeries Oberthur, Rennes, 1960.

² See Gourvil, 1960, pp. 148–157 for examples.

family name (or the most important part of the name) is not actually the last item on the line. This is clearly illustrated in *Nobiliaire universel de France*. Volume 7 contains a long list of Hersart's ancestors and other relatives, all of which are referred to as "HERSART".³ However, it should be noted here that naming conventions are fluid and contextual. Hersart himself uses different names at different times. There are examples of letters by him signed "*Th. Hersart Villemarqué*"⁴ and even his 1838 letter from Wales to his father signed "*Votre fils, Th. de La Villemarqué*".⁵

Hersart had been making a name for himself among the scholarly circles since the age of 18. In 1838, one year before the first publication of the *Barzaz Breiz*, the 23-year-old aristocrat travelled to England and Wales. He was made a Bard at the Eisteddfod, and his other destinations included Stonehenge and Oxford, where he was able to consult medieval Welsh manuscripts containing, among other things, the *Mabinogion* texts. He also made the acquaintance of Lady Charlotte Guest, the first published English translator of the *Mabinogion* collection in its entirety.⁶ This international success further boosted Hersart's reputation among Parisian scholars. Hersart's journey to Britain and his meetings with the Celtic circles there clearly inspired him. Later, in 1861 he formed the *Breurie Breiz* 'Brotherhood of Brittany', a scholarly association based on the Welsh *Gorsedd* and a precursor of the *Goursez Vreiz* 'Gorsedd of Brittany', which is further indicative of Hersart's interest in matters Celtic. This is an important key to understanding the *Barzaz Breiz* as a product of the Romantic movement. In a time of growing interest in minority languages

³ See Nicolas Viton de Saint-Allais, *Nobiliaire universel de France, ou recueil général des généalogies historiques des maisons nobles de ce royaume*, Vol. 7, C.-F. Patris, Paris, 1816, p. 448 for an entry of Théodore-Claude-Henri and all his siblings.

⁴ Gourvil, 1960, p. 146.

⁵ Pierre Hersart de la Villemarqué, *La Villemarqué : sa vie & ses oeuvres*, Librairie Ancienne Honoré Champion, Paris, 1926, p. 53.

⁶ See Rachel Bromwich, "'The Mabinogion' and Lady Charlotte Guest", *Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion*, 1986, pp. 137 for an outline of this tense encounter. Hersart helped Guest by providing her with a transcript of *Yvain* of Chrétien de Troyes and then claimed that he should be listed as co-author of her publication.

and burgeoning European cultural nationalism, the *Barzaz Breiz* was intended as a Breton voice to show that Brittany has cultural riches comparable to other European nations.

Since its first publication in 1839, the *Barzaz Breiz* has received considerable attention both in France and abroad. Within a year of its publication, translations of parts of the work started to appear, and it has since been translated into numerous languages. It may be considered one of, if not the, most influential publication of material from Brittany. It earned Hersart considerable international recognition; however, his place in the spotlight also brought with it questions.

There has been much dispute over the ‘authenticity’ of the songs published in the *Barzaz Breiz* as well as over the evidence for Hersart’s claims about the dating of the song texts. The debate was started at the International Celtic Congress in 1867⁷ and later continued by Hersart’s contemporary and fellow collector François-Marie Luzel.⁸ The attacks on Hersart’s academic practices, comparing him to the likes of James Macpherson⁹, and Hersart’s refusal to defend himself resulted in his losing credibility in the eyes of many other collectors and academics.

To understand Hersart’s editorial practices, one has to look at the academic customs of the 19th century. It was common for collectors and editors to “improve” their collected material to a varying degree. Much can be learnt about Hersart’s intentions from his preface and introduction to the *Barzaz Breiz*. He makes several references to the editor’s role as an archaeologist attempting to restore to its former glory a once-perfect piece eroded by the ages, a little more simplified and vulgarized each time it was passed on. As he puts it, “[*chants populaires originaux*] sont riches et ornés dans le principe, ... le temps seul les dépouille” ‘[original folk songs] are rich and ornate in principle – time alone denudes them’.¹⁰

⁷ See Mary-Ann Constantine, *Breton Ballads*, CMCS Publications, Aberystwyth, 1996, pp. 15–16 for a summary of the dispute.

⁸ See François-Marie Luzel, *De l’authenticité des chants du Barzaz-Breiz*, Guyon Francisque, Saint-Brieuc, 1872.

⁹ Concerns over authenticity of supposedly oral sources goes back to the famous debate of the eighteenth century over the nature of James Macpherson’s Ossianic ‘translations’.

¹⁰ *BB*, p. v.

There are ample mentions in the preface and introduction suggesting that Hersart believed his editing practices to be perfectly justified. After all, improving collected songs was the norm during his time, as he himself admits, mentioning ‘the method of Walter Scott’.¹¹ One can see how connecting different versions of a ballad in order to attain a more complete plot or swapping individual words or expressions for more polished ones may have seemed like a precise science to Hersart, and it is true that his final versions often appear a lot more complete because of this;¹² however, he inadvertently or otherwise introduced his own ideas and preconceptions about the world into these ballads through his editorial choices.

In 1959, Francis Gourvil published his thesis on Hersart and the *Barzaz Breiz*.¹³ While his work provides very thoroughly researched and useful bibliographical information about the author of the *Barzaz Breiz*, his conclusions about the authenticity of several of the song texts seem biased and excessively harsh, especially in light of the new evidence presented by Donatien Laurent in his thesis and partially published, three decades after Gourvil, in his *Aux sources du Barzaz Breiz : la mémoire d'un peuple*.¹⁴ Laurent provides a study of the then newly-discovered Hersart’s notebooks, thus shedding more light on the provenance of the songs in the *Barzaz Breiz* as well as Hersart’s command of the Breton language – another target of Gourvil’s criticism. Laurent goes on to discuss Hersart’s role as an editor “improving” and embellishing the songs he collected, in line with the collector’s own admission described in his methodology.¹⁵

The ‘authenticity’ of the *Barzaz Breiz* is a long running and still heated debate, and it is not my intention here to join it and add fuel to the fire. Instead, I wish to look at the song texts in the *Barzaz Breiz* as works of original literature based on traditional material

¹¹ *BB*, p. vi.

¹² This is particularly true for *Ar Breur Mager*. See Chapter 2.3 for a detailed study.

¹³ *Théodore-Claude-Henri Hersart de La Villemarqué (1815–1895) et le Barzaz-Breiz (1839-1845-1867). Origines, Editions, Sources, Critique, Influences*, Imprimeries Oberthur, Rennes, 1960.

¹⁴ *Ar Men*, Douarnenez, 1989.

¹⁵ Hersart’s methodology will be further discussed in the introduction to Part 2 of this thesis.

and thus consider them in their own right. It is my intention in this thesis to study particular instances and types of Hersart's editorial practices and their influence on the portrayal of female characters and demonstrate a methodology for doing so. It would be beyond the scope of this thesis to go into more depth regarding the justifiability of these editorial choices because it would have to involve a broader historical analysis of the academic methods of the 19th century.

In more recent years, Breton ballads have been studied using various methodologies. One of these involves comparing the songs to historical documents such as court records to shed light on the true story behind the song. This methodology is deployed notably by Éva Guillorel in her *La complainte et la plainte*¹⁶ and by Natalie Franz in her *Breton Song Traditions and the Case of the Gwerzioù*¹⁷. Even though my own methodology in this thesis is more literary and linguistic, this approach provides a valuable perspective for studying song texts from this corpus and helps situating them in history.

In her *Barzaz-Breiz: Une fiction pour s'inventer*¹⁸, Nelly Blanchard uses a different approach. Although her work makes an interesting point in situating the *Barzaz Breiz* within the context of international literature and European romanticism as well as looking at the influence of Hersart's own beliefs on the *Barzaz Breiz*, Blanchard's study is almost exclusively focused on the French introductions and footnotes. She uses computer-assisted linguistic analysis to uncover patterns in these texts, such as the frequency of certain words and their proximity to one another. This method shows potential; however, some of her conclusions seem to be based on false assumptions and unavoidable generalizations due to this statistical approach.¹⁹ I propose a more qualitative method because the relationship

¹⁶ *La complainte et la plainte : chansons de tradition orale et archives criminelles : deux regards croisés sur la Bretagne d'Ancien Régime (16e-18e siècles)*, Linguistics, Université Rennes 2, 2008.

¹⁷ *Breton Song Traditions and the Case of the Gwerzioù: Women's Voices, Women's Lives*, T.I.R., Lannion, 2011.

¹⁸ Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2006.

¹⁹ To give an example, on page 12, she uses the fact that Hersart uses "nous" and "on" 'we/us' more often than any other pronoun except 'it' to support her claim that he, in his role as the author, is making himself part of the text. She even goes on to suggest that that this means that he does not hide his presence as per the fashion of academic writers. I would argue that the opposite is true. Using the second-person plural to refer

between individual words or phrases can change depending on the context and a more detailed view is therefore required when studying instances of editing. An important part of my hypothesis is that a small change to the text can have a large impact on characterization.

In contrast to Blanchard's book, the focus of my thesis is primarily on the Breton song texts. She is not wrong to consider the *Barzañ Breiz* as a whole²⁰ because that is arguably how it was intended to be perceived by the reader (which perhaps makes it even more shocking that she pays so little attention to the song texts). However, the process of writing introductions is very different from the process of editing folk songs, and therefore the introductions are less relevant to the study presented here. They do play a role in the way we as readers interpret the song texts and may show us how Hersart himself interpreted the songs, but even though the introductions may shed some light on why he edited the songs in the way he did, in order to study how he edited them, we need to look at the song texts themselves.

In her book, Mary-Ann Constantine mentions the role of Hersart's editorial choices on the portrayal of women: "The vast majority of [Hersart's] women are ... models of chastity and fidelity, of beautiful and saintly suffering: 'unnatural' women, destructive of family bonds, are largely absent. And yet in the *gwerzïou* there are many ... it is clear that [Hersart] was operating some form of 'screening' in his selection of heroines."²¹ I will examine this idea further by looking at the female archetypes in the *Barzañ Breiz* to see whether the vast majority are portrayed in this way and whether any patterns of portrayal can be established, and, where possible, making links with Hersart's editorial choices. A further study of the idea of 'screening' by comparing the women in the *Barzañ Breiz* with a wider spectrum of female characters in the tradition as a whole would be valuable, but it is beyond the scope of this thesis, and I shall focus on the song texts that are present in the

to oneself is common practice in academic writing, even in French, and its effect is to make the author sound as part of a collective, effectively hiding his/her individuality.

²⁰ Blanchard, 2006, p. 12.

²¹ *Breton Ballads*, p. 197.

Barzañ Breiz while occasionally looking to examples from the broader tradition for comparison.

In Part One, I will identify the different types of female characters present in the song texts in the *Barzañ Breiz* and examine patterns in their portrayal and discuss connected themes. I will look at the language and plot elements used for characterization in order to identify the female archetypes of the *Barzañ Breiz*.

In Part Two, I will give a detailed study of three songs from the *Barzañ Breiz*, namely *Loiz a bag Abalard*²², *Ar Plac'h Dimezet Gand Satan*²³ and *Ar Breur Mager*²⁴ and their counterparts collected by different collectors of Hersart's era. I will examine the differences between the various versions with particular focus on the portrayal of women, and I will attempt to identify individual editorial choices and their implications for the characterization of women in the *Barzañ Breiz*.

Studying Breton ballads by comparing different versions of the same song is not a new idea. It has been used by multiple academics with various objectives in mind. To give a few examples, Constantine (1996) uses it to look at leprosy and infanticide in Breton ballads. Guillorel (2010) uses this method in three case studies, each examining a different aspect of traditional songs: differences in theme composition between Breton ballads and French material, the evolution of a song text by oral transmission, and the differences between a ballad and a written source. They both use ballad comparison to look at the themes behind the ballad and at the nature of the tradition. My approach is instead focused on the ballads themselves and involves a more detailed study of the differences in language in the different versions, in particular with regards to characterization.

Unless stated otherwise, all translations in this thesis of both Breton and French are my own work. I have not attempted to rhyme the translated passages from songs or preserve their verse structure – instead, I aimed at maintaining the closest possible

²² 'Héloise and Abélard', *BB*, pp. 135–8.

²³ 'The woman married to Satan', *BB*, pp. 157–161.

²⁴ 'The foster brother', *BB*, pp. 163–170.

meaning, but also sufficiently good legibility.²⁵ In some cases, I offer more than one term or an additional footnote in order to clarify the exact sense in which the original was intended. I have not translated any personal or place names from the original Breton into French or English, unless a known English translation exists, such as in the case of ‘Paris’ or ‘King Arthur’.

I am using the 1883 reprint of the 1867 edition of the *Barzañ Breiz*²⁶ because of its wide availability and also because the 1867 edition is the third and final edition of the *Barzañ Breiz*, meaning that there have not been any further changes to the text, and it can therefore be considered Hersart’s final version. For this reason, it is more suitable for the purposes of this research than the earlier editions because it shows the full extent of Hersart’s editing.

As I mentioned above, Hersart’s editing methods meant that his own views influenced the final product. If, as Mary-Ann Constantine says, female characters appear in a certain way in his songs – if they often possess a range of virtues and a docile and yet strong and noble nature, it is perhaps because that is how Hersart himself viewed women. It is possible that his mother may have not only started the collection presented in the *Barzañ Breiz*, but also unknowingly shaped its form through what she meant to her son.²⁷ An interdisciplinary study integrating a psychological perspective would be fruitful; however, my intention in this thesis is to study these song texts in terms of their literary content and identify patterns that might in turn open the way to further questions.

²⁵ I am referring to making the translation sound more natural in English without interfering with the meaning. A recurring example of this is adding “and” where no conjunction exists in Breton when it is strongly implied, as this makes the intended connection between the different clauses clearer in English.

²⁶ Théodore Hersart de la Villemarqué, *Barzañ Breiz* = *Chants populaires de la Bretagne*, 8th rep., Didier, Paris, 1883.

²⁷ Blanchard makes an attempt at quantifying this by looking at the countless instances where Hersart identifies himself as “*le fils de*” or “*l’enfant de*” ‘the son/child of’. She makes an interesting point about Hersart never identifying himself in the *Barzañ Breiz* as the son of his father. (Blanchard, 2006, p. 44.) We know that Hersart dedicated the *Barzañ Breiz* to his mother. Even though it would be unsafe to make any solid conclusions based on Blanchard’s statistical data alone, here it does seem to support the idea that Hersart had a particularly strong relationship with his mother.

1. Part 1

Introduction

The female characters in the *Barzaaz Breiz* often progress through different stages: a young girl becomes a fiancée, a wife, a mother, a widow. Often two or more roles cannot be separated; if a married woman has a child, she is therefore both a wife and a mother. The songs also contain certain repeating themes about women that occur in different permutations. This part is divided into chapters examining the portrayal of the roles that the women in the *Barzaaz Breiz* take on throughout their lives. These chapters are further divided into sections in order to discuss connected themes and archetypes emerging from the various patterns.

Although there is an exception to every rule, the *Barzaaz Breiz* seems to offer a recurring portrayal for many of these character types. Characters of the same type are not only described as sharing the same characteristics and acting in a similar way, but some of the narrative techniques and expressions used to convey these features are shared across songs. It is important to note here that this is, to a certain degree, due to the tradition itself. While Hersart may not have had a completely free hand in how common character types are depicted in Breton folk songs, his manipulation of their portrayal reveals interesting patterns. In this part, I will examine the different female archetypes present in the *Barzaaz Breiz*, and where possible, these patterns will be identified and supported with examples from the songs and placed in the wider context of Brittany and France in the time during and before the 19th century.

1.1. Young girl

One of the interesting features of the Breton language is that the word *plac'h* can mean a woman of any age. It is often specified using an adjective or a suffix. *Plac'h yaouank* or *plac'hig* becomes a '(young) girl', and *plac'h kozh* 'old woman' is used to describe a woman roughly two generations older. As a matter of fact, the same is true about the Breton *paotr* 'boy/man'. These two words can therefore be better translated as 'female human' and 'male human'. There are, of course, other terms to describe people and their age,²⁸ but these two terms are perhaps the most commonly used.

I decided to name this section 'Young girl' to imitate the Breton expression, but perhaps a more accurate title would be 'Unmarried woman of a marrying age'.²⁹ It is by far the most common type of character in the *Barzaz Breiz*. This is partly due to the fact that a wife or a mother often starts as an unmarried woman of a marrying age at the beginning of the story. Later on, another role might become more significant for the purposes of the plot. This is especially true in the case of the ballads with a female protagonist, where we often see the progression of a young girl into a married woman, possibly a mother, and in many cases, the story ends with the woman's untimely death. This will be discussed in more depth in further sections.

²⁸ In the *Barzaz Breiz*, people are often referred to by their function in the family. A not-so-young-anymore man of the house might be called *ozae'h* 'patriarch', a woman of a similar age might be referred to as *moereb* 'aunt/granny'. In a similar fashion, an only daughter is often called *pennherez* '(female) heir', signifying that she will inherit all her parents' possessions – and is therefore a lucrative match!

²⁹ In a few cases, an exact age is given, placing the girl in her teenage years. This seems to be partly because it was an acceptable marrying age in Hersart's times and partly due to the fact that the Breton stress on the penultimate syllable makes the combination of a disyllabic number and the monosyllabic Breton for 'year' *bloaz* particularly suitable for traditional music. The girl is *daouzek* 'twelve' in Loiza hag Abalard (BB, pp. 135–8), between twelve and *trizek* 'thirteen' in Kloarek Rohan (BB, pp. 173–182), *pemzek* 'fifteen' in Itroun Varia Folgoat (BB, pp. 273–8), not yet *seizek* 'seventeen' in Ar C'hloarek Paour (BB, pp. 464–5) and *trioneu'h* 'eighteen' in Ar Breur Mager (BB, pp. 163–170). However, this is not the case in Fontanella (BB, pp. 288–292), where the girl is *pevarzek* 'fourteen', which does seem to fit into the rhythm of this particular song, perhaps thanks to it being followed by two monosyllabic words.

Daughter

Another Breton term for a girl is *merc'h*, which in the singular primarily means ‘daughter’. By definition, every woman is first a daughter; however, this aspect of a character is not always explored in the *Barzaz Breiz*. In the case of some characters, it may be implied by the presence of a mother or a father; however, unless there are sufficient interactions between the girl and her parents, any characterization of her as a daughter would be missing from the song.

In the cases where the girl does interact with one or both of her parents, certain patterns can be observed. Of the five songs (all of them from the *gwerz* or ‘ballad’ section of the *Barzaz Breiz*) offering enough material³⁰ for characterizing a daughter, three feature a situation where her parents clearly act against her wishes and, in the case of at least one of them, against better judgement, and yet the girl obeys in each of these instances, even though it ultimately leads to her untimely demise.

In *Fillorez Ann Aotrou Gwesklen*³¹, a mother sends her daughter to fetch milk to slash-and-burn workers. The girl pleads with her mother not to send her, citing a valid and serious reason, which takes four stanzas to convey. The last one summarises it in plain language:

*Va mammik mad, ha me ho ped!
Gand Rogerson em onn spiet.*

‘My good mother, I’m begging you! Rogerson is stalking me.’ She even offers an alternative solution: sending one of her sisters instead. It suggests that the nearby Saxons do not pose any immediate threat to anyone else because only she has been singled out by their leader Rogerson. The later encounter between Rogerson and the girl’s godfather Lord Gwesklen suggests that this fact is publicly known because Gwesklen knows that Rogerson was the last to see the girl alive. It is also possible that the cook whom the girl asked for help

³⁰ See Appendix 1.1. These songs are marked either “X” or “o” in the appropriate column.

³¹ ‘The Goddaughter of Lord Gwesklen’, *BB*, pp. 212–9.

conveyed that information to Lord Gwesklen, but Rogerson’s defence suggests that this affair has been in the open:

– *Mac’harid n’am eus ket gvelet*
Abaoue pardon Sant Servet.

‘I have not seen Mac’harid since the *pardon*³² of Saint Servet.’ It suggests that it is public knowledge that Rogerson and Mac’harid had met at the festival, and perhaps that is where the unpleasantness started. We can therefore say that it is highly unwise of her parents to send Mac’harid when they could have sent one of her sisters instead.

And yet, she goes. This suggests extreme obedience. She knows what is going to happen to her, because when she takes the pail of milk to do as she has been told, she tells her parents:

– *Kenavo, mamm, kenavo, tad,*
N’ho kwelo mui va daou-lagad;

Kenavo d’hoch va c’hoar benan,
Ha d’hoch va c’hoarik Fransezan. –

‘Goodbye, mother, goodbye, father, you will not see my eyes again. Goodbye to you, my eldest sister, and to you my little sister Fransezan.’ Furthermore, in the following stanza, she is referred to as *plac’hik mad* ‘good girl’.

*Pen-Herez Keroulaz*³³ offers a similar plot element, but here the mother’s demands consist of the girl getting married to someone that she does not love.³⁴ The girl has a

³² *Pardon* is a type of Breton religious festival.

³³ ‘The Heiress of Keroulaz’, *BB*, pp. 293–9.

³⁴ The role of the parents in choosing their child’s spouse or profession is discussed in Natalie Anne Franz’s *Breton Song Traditions and the Case of the Gwerzjoù: Women’s Voices, Women’s Lives*, 2011, p. 53. She cites legal historian Jean Quénart in that “parental decisions [in these matters] are non-negotiable”. This perhaps suggests that any resistance on the part of the daughter is futile in the long run, even though according to McMillan (*France and Women, 1789-1914: Gender, society and politics*, 2000, p. 33), a French law of 20 September 1792 changed the age of majority: “A man and a woman aged 21 were allowed to marry without parental consent, whereas under the Ancient Régime the age of majority had been 30 for men and 25 for women.” (See also Duby, 2002, Vol. 4, p. 135 for the influence of this law on gender equality.) However, the songs here probably feature younger individuals. As mentioned in the introduction to Part 1, in the rare cases where age is given, the girl is between 12 and 18 years of age. One also has to make a distinction between legal right and local custom. The fact that something is legal does not mean that it is always seen as acceptable by the community. McMillan further says: “In still other regions – Brittany, ... – family structure was equally

sweetheart called Kerdomaz. Their fondness for each other is described in some detail in three-and-a-half stanzas. Another male acquaintance of hers also makes an appearance: Salaun. The song does not offer us much description, except that he rides a *[m]arc'hik du* 'little black horse'. The two of them obviously have not been romantically attached in the past because the girl assumes that he has come to help with the dogs. He, however, says that he has come to "*ober al lez*" 'court [her]'.

The mother wants her to marry Marquis Melz who made an appearance the previous day together with his mother with an obvious objective. The daughter makes a plea:

*Va mamm itroun, ha me ho ped,
D'ar markiz Melz n'em roit ket;
Va roit kent da Bennanrun,
Pe, mar kirit, da Zalaun.*

*Va roit kent da Gerdomaz,
Hen-nez en deuz ar muia gras,
Enn ti-mann e teu aliez,
Hag he lezit d'in ober lez. —*

'My lady mother, I'm begging you, do not give me to Marquis Melz; give me rather to Pennanrun or, if you like, to Salaun. Give me rather to Kerdomaz, that one has the most grace. He comes often to this house and you let him court me.' She gives her mother three alternatives, which shows that she wants to obey her mother's wishes, but she also wants to negotiate a compromise that will not make her miserable.

The mother has two reasons for wishing the daughter to marry the marquis: she believes him to be rich, although there is evidence to the contrary, and she wants Kerdomaz for herself, as the song clearly states. She says: "*Tra kent ho mad na zalc'hann-me*" 'I only care about what's best for you', but whether that is true in light of the other facts is another matter.

complex but marriage was tightly controlled by families." (pp. 48–9) In the face of this non-negotiability of an arranged match, the songs studied in this chapter still provide some interesting variation in terms of the girl's obedience.

The girl is told to marry the marquis and so she must. As she leaves her family home to be with her new husband, everybody is crying out of pity for her. Just like in the previous song, the girl says goodbye – this time to the family house and her neighbours:

– *Kenavo, ti braẓ Keroulaz,
Biken enn hoc’h na rinn eun paẓ;
Kenavo, va amezzeien,
Kenavo breman, da viken.* –

‘Goodbye, the big house of Keroulaz, I will never step inside you again. Goodbye, my neighbours, goodbye now and forever.’ This shows that she knows that she will never return, probably because she will die.

She later sends a letter asking her mother to come. The mother and Kerdomaz (who have been spending rather a lot of time together recently) come as fast as they can, but the daughter is already dead. The mother recognises her guilt:

– *Ma eo maro ar benn-bereẓ,
Me a zo he gwir lazereẓ!”*

‘If the heiress/daughter is dead, I am her true killer!’. Following this, both her mother and Kerdomaz spend the rest of their lives in a monastery.

In *Azenorik-C’blaẓ*³⁵, the daughter offers a little more resistance. She has a sweetheart, who, to make things more dramatic, is currently dying. When she finds out that she is to be married off to Lord Iouen, she says:

– *Mar d’eo benn-arc’hoaz ma eured,
Mont a rinn a-bred da gousket,

Hag ac’hano ne zavinn ket,
Ken da lienna vinn savet.* –

‘If it is my wedding tomorrow, I’ll go to bed early and I will not get up from there before I am wrapped in a shroud.’ This does foreshadow her death, but it also sounds like something a petulant child might say. A few stanzas later, she also curses her parents:

³⁵ ‘Pale Azenor’, *BB*, pp. 242–8.

– *Malloꝝ d’ann heur e teu aman!*
D’am z̄ad, d’am mamm, ar re gentan!

Difennet eo d’ann dud iaouank
Da heulia, er bed-man, ho c’hoant. –

‘Cursed be the hour that is coming and first of all my father and my mother! Young people are forbidden from following their desire in this world.’ This clearly shows resistance, although her defiance is in words only until the very end. It is clear that she has little power to prevent the future. After the wedding and in her new bedroom, she calls her new husband *intanv* ‘widower’ and after a brief conversation, she dies – possibly from a broken heart, but because her sweetheart is not mentioned anymore, it appears more as a sort of protest death.

The events in *Baron Jaouioꝝ*³⁶ bear more similarity to *Penn-Hereꝝ Keroulaꝝ* in that the girl shows little resistance against being married off to someone that she does not love. The difference here is that it was her brother who quite literally sealed the deal and sold her to the baron, and her parents seem oblivious to the fact³⁷. When she is told:

– *Ia! d’ar baron c’hui zo gwerzet,*
Ha mont kuit timad a zo red;

‘Yes! You are sold to the baron, and you have to leave right now,’ her reaction, surprisingly, is to inquire about appropriate clothing for the occasion. She offers no resistance whatsoever, even though it is apparent that she is not happy about the situation. When she leaves town, she starts crying and saying *kenavo* ‘goodbye’ in a similar fashion to the previous ballads, this time to the bells of her country/region, the bells of her parish and Saint Anne³⁸. Once living with the baron, she sends a message back home via the birds. The fact that she is saying goodbye suggests that she knows that she is going to die:

³⁶ *BB*, pp. 205–210.

³⁷ There is a narrative technique using repetition and the number three. She first asks her mother, who says to ask her father. Her father says to ask her brother, who finally sheds some light on the rumour. He admits to selling her to the baron.

³⁸ This possibly refers to a church, but since Saint Anne is the patroness of Brittany and the girl is probably leaving the country, it might very well mean the actual saint.

*C'hui ia d'ar ger, me na eann ket,
C'hui zo laouen, me glac'haret.*

*Va gourc'hennou a refet
D'am holl vroiñ pa ho gwelfet;*

*D'ar vammik e deuz va ganet,
Ha d'ann tad en deuz va maget;*

*D'ar vammik e deuz va ganet,
D'ar belek koz neuñ va badeet.*

*Kenavo d'ann holl a larfet,
Ha d'am breur e ma pardonet. –*

'You go home and I do not, you are happy and I am in sorrow. Give my regards to all of my fellow countrymen when you see them, to the dear mother who gave birth to me and to the father who raised me. To the dear mother who gave birth to me and to the old priest who baptised me. Say goodbye to all and to my brother that he is forgiven.' She clearly does not hold it against any of her family, and the language used suggests that she is a grateful daughter and a good Christian. She then also appears to her parents in a vision, in which a voice tells them that their daughter is dead.

Of these four songs, three describe a very obedient and good, reasonable daughter, with *Baron Jaouioñ* clearly portraying her as a good Christian with a sense of gratefulness. In the case of *Azenorik-C'hlañ*, even though she speaks up against her parents, ultimately she does what they ask of her, and she is portrayed in a very sympathetic light.

We are now getting to the last of the five songs discussed in this section: *Livaden Geris*³⁹. 'Is' is a city in the sea, and the king's daughter Dahut, upon the request of her lover, steals her father's key when he is asleep. This key is then used to let water inside the city and sink it. She clearly defies her father in order to do an act of evil. However, the song does not offer us much detail, and there is a stanza suggesting that it is entirely her lover's idea. Dahut tells her lover:

³⁹ 'The Submersion of the City of Is', *BB*, pp. 39–42.

– *Ann alc’houe a vez̃o tennet;*
Ar puns a vez̃o dibrennet;
Pez̃ a ioulit-hu ra vo gret! –

‘The key will be taken, the well unlocked: your will shall be done!’ The city sinks and she becomes a *morverc’h* a ‘girl/daughter of the sea’ or ‘mermaid’ and sings songs that are *klemvanuz̃* ‘whining/complaining’. This song might not seem at all sympathetic towards the girl because she defies her father and causes the destruction of the city; however, if we look at another version of the same legend, we might come to a different conclusion.

The by far better-known *Ker Is hag ar Roué Grallon*⁴⁰ written by Olivier Souvestre in the middle of the 19th century offers a much more detailed portrayal of the king’s daughter. Among other things, she has “*tan an ifern en he c’halon*”⁴¹ ‘the fire of hell in her heart’, and she is regularly seen hosting what could be best described as a satanic orgy:

Ha warne gant an holl en noaz̃h
En ur ganañ: ‘malloz̃h d’ar groaz̃!’
Reas en seiz̃h stumm disheñvel
Dañson ar seiz̃h pec’hed marvel.

‘And they were all naked and singing “curse on the cross!” And in seven different ways, they did the dances of the seven mortal sins.’ Although Dahut from *Livaden Geris* is not portrayed in quite as much horrific detail, it is still clear that she is not a good daughter.

As these songs show, most daughters in the *Barzañ Breiz̃* are portrayed in a very positive way with obedience being their primary characteristic. Even in the case of *Livaden Geris*, there is a lack of any direct negative portrayal and no actual confrontation with her father or his explicit rules that would further showcase her disobedience.

⁴⁰ Published in *Mikael, Kloarek breton* (Paris, Poulet-Malassis, 1862), p. 57–71, as cited in Ollivier J. “Catalogue bibliographique de la Chanson populaire bretonne sur feuilles volantes (suite) (Léon, Tréguier, Cornouaille)”. *Annales de Bretagne* vol. 46 (1939). p. 161.

⁴¹ The *peurunvan* (standardized) orthography is used here.

Sister

In the previous section, we already discussed the girl in *Baron Jaouioz*⁴² obeying her brother and subsequently forgiving him for selling her to the baron and indirectly causing her death. The theme of sisters mistreated by their brothers does not seem to play a major part in the *Barzaz Breiz*; however, another example can be found in the ballad of *Iannik Skolan*⁴³ and will be discussed in a further section.

Apart from *Baron Jaouioz*, there are only two other songs in the *Barzaz Breiz* that deal with a relationship between a girl and her sibling with sufficient depth. These are *Lez-Breiz*⁴⁴ and *Floc'h Loeiz Trizek*⁴⁵.

The ballad of *Floc'h Loeiz Trizek* is about a sister who attempts to save her brother from execution for killing another page in an argument with swords. Their loving relationship is described in some detail. When the page sends his best friend to inform his sister of his current situation, he says:

*Ma zeufe ma c'hoar bet' enn on
Konfort a refe d'am c'halon. –*

'If my sister would come, it would give comfort to my heart,' clearly suggesting that they are close. He speaks of her again later when he is waiting for her to come:

*Hi vo bep noz o c'hervel breur,
O c'hervel breurig e peb heur. –*

...

*Klevet kelou demenz va c'hoar,
Va c'hoarik kez; daoust hag hi oar?*

'Every night, she will be calling for her brother, calling for her dear brother all the time. [I'd love] to hear news of my sister, my poor dear sister – does she know?'

⁴² *BB*, pp. 205–210.

⁴³ *BB*, pp. 341–8.

⁴⁴ *BB*, pp. 80–105.

⁴⁵ 'The page of Louis XIII', *BB*, pp. 302–8.

When she is given the news, she is very upset, causing her to spill some wine. She leaves for Paris that day. When she arrives, her brother is at the point of execution. She pleads for his freedom, offering a considerable amount of money. Unfortunately, she is too late, the sentence has been passed, and her brother's head is chopped off. She then enquires about the exact nature of his crime of the King and Queen, which turns into a series of racist insults in both directions, after which the sister promises to inform her fellow countrymen of this injustice. This then leads to the French king losing 10,000 crowns and 10,000 men for one killed page. The last part of the song does not provide any more characterization of the woman as a sister, but it is clear that she was very fond of her brother and did her best to attempt to save him.

In *Lez-Breiz*, we are told of a meeting between a young man and his little sister; the man had left home ten years ago to become a knight. He returns to his family home only to find it in a state of neglect, with only a strange old woman and a young girl living there. She starts crying when she sees him and explains that knights make her cry because they remind her of her brother. She also tells him that her mother and her other brothers are dead. Such a strong emotional reaction suggests love for her lost brother. He then further enquires about her brother, and she says:

*Ha gan-i-me he c'broaz benniget,
Frealz am c'balon baour war ar bed. –*

'I have his holy cross – solace to my poor heart in this world.' He then tells her his name, which takes her breath away. After a short moment of shock, she leaps into his arms and starts kissing him, 'drowning him in her tears'. This suggests pure love.

After this episode, we do not hear of the sister again until later in the story, where Lez-Breiz is about to go fight the king, and his sister is begging him not to go.

*– Va breur, va breur ker, ma em c'haret,
D'ann emgann hirion na eot ket;*

‘My dear brother, if you love me, you will not go to battle today.’ She explains that death is waiting for him, describing a prophetic vision of a *morvarc’h* ‘sea horse’⁴⁶ being smothered by a snake. He does not listen, saying that he does not fear death. Things do not end well for the hero, but there is no more mention of the sister after the prophecy.

In these two songs, the characters of the sisters share several traits. They are both extremely fond of their brother, which is shown through their emotional responses and affectionate language quoted above. Furthermore, they both display a high degree of loyalty and helpfulness, even though in each case, there is nothing more the sister can do to prevent her brother’s death. As a point of interest, in both of these songs, the brother is executed by order of the French king, and there is a nationalistic subtext in both. The sister conveys a large part of the nationalistic message in both of these songs – in *Floc’h Loeiz Trizek* during the conversation with the King and Queen, and in *Lez-Breiz* when describing the vision of the *morvarc’h* fighting the foreign enemy. This portrays the young woman as a gentle and loving sister and yet a strong and determined *partisane*. According to McMillan, protests initiated and led by women were not uncommon in France on either side of the revolutionary divide.⁴⁷ This type of character is therefore not surprising; however, some of the nationalistic agenda may be of Hersart’s addition.⁴⁸

Another ‘type’ of sister present in the *Barzaz Breiz* is a foster sister. I counted three mentions. In *Gwaz Aotrou Gwesklen*⁴⁹, the maid who is helping the captured man escape simply says that ‘the guard will not be a problem because he is [her] foster brother’, suggesting a good relationship. In *Fontanella*⁵⁰, during the kidnapping, Fontanella asks the little girl what she is doing.

⁴⁶ The *morvarc’h* symbolises Brittany. See also *Diougan Gwenc’hlan* ‘The Prophecy of Gwenc’hlan’ (BB, pp. 19–22).

⁴⁷ McMillan, 2000, pp. 20–23, 25–27.

⁴⁸ Franz suggests that plots involving opposition between Brittany and France rather than the lord and the peasants seem to be uncommon in other collections of songs (Franz, 2011, p. 136).

⁴⁹ ‘The Vassal of Lord Gwesklen’, BB, pp. 221–6.

⁵⁰ BB, pp. 288–292.

*Klasket a rann boukejo han
D'am breurik mager a garann;*

'I'm making a bouquet of summer flowers for my dear foster brother whom I love.' This can refer to romantic love, but the age of the girl⁵¹ might also suggest a more innocent type of affection between (foster) siblings. On the other hand, the ballad *Ar Breur Mager*⁵² 'The Foster Brother' is primarily about a young girl engaged to her foster brother. This ballad will be examined in detail in the dedicated chapter in Part 2 of this paper.

Similarly to blood-sisters, foster sisters in the *Barzaz Breiz* are also very fond of their foster brothers. Of these three songs, at least one and possibly two suggest a romantic attachment. None of the songs discussed in this section suggest any fault to the sister's character or intentions – she is portrayed as a loving, loyal and dependable relation. It is interesting that relationships between two (or more) sisters are not explored in the *Barzaz Breiz* despite sisters being present in several songs, namely *Fillorez Ann Aotrou Gwesklen*⁵³ discussed in the previous section, *Jenovefa Rustefan*⁵⁴ and *Itroun Varia Folgoat*⁵⁵.

Sweetheart

Love and romantic attachments appear in a number of songs in the *Barzaz Breiz*. Both men and women are often referred to by their beloved ones as *dous*, which in this context can best be translated as 'sweetheart'. There is an interesting disparity between the portrayal of the female romantic partners in the *gwerzïoù* section of the *Barzaz Breiz* and in the *sonioù* section. This seems to be a universal pattern observed among the collected material of other collectors as well. Natalie Anne Franz points out: "...the young woman who knows what she does and does not want, and who is not shy in voicing her opinions is

⁵¹ She still has a *magerez* 'nanny', and Fontanella puts her in a convent for an unspecified amount of time until she turns fourteen.

⁵² *BB*, pp. 163–170.

⁵³ 'The Goddaughter of Lord Gwesklen', *BB*, pp. 212–9.

⁵⁴ *BB*, pp. 266–271.

⁵⁵ 'Our Lady of Folgoat', *BB*, pp. 273–8.

a more steady presence within these songs [*sonion*]...’’⁵⁶ This is perhaps a kind way of expressing this difference. Whereas the (female) sweethearts in the *gwerziù* section of the *Barzañ Breiz* are portrayed as loyal and faithful quite literally to the death, many of the *sonion* are told from a jilted man’s perspective, and in a few of the cases, the woman who rejects him is portrayed as the antagonist of the story.

To illustrate this with examples, let us look at the *gwerziù* section first. In *Azenorik-C’hlaz*⁵⁷ and *Penn-Herez Keroulaz*⁵⁸ and also in *Ar Breur Mager*⁵⁹, the girl is forced to marry someone other than her sweetheart, which in all three examples makes her die of sorrow. In *Azenorik-C’hlaz*, the other man is rich and of noble descent, in *Penn-Herez Keroulaz* he is a nobleman, although probably not rich, as suggested on a few occasions in the song, and in *Ar Breur Mager*, although he is portrayed as a bridegroom (not literally) from hell (*“Jobig Al-loarek”* ‘Joe the lunatic’ – not a flattering name even for a stable boy), at least he is still alive unlike the girl’s fiancé.⁶⁰ This suggests extreme loyalty and faithfulness, because it would have been easy for the young woman to make do with her lot – especially in *Azenorik-C’hlaz* as we are not told of a single fault of her new husband. In fact, there is a stanza suggesting that he is ‘quite a catch’:

– *Azenorik, pec’hi a ret,*
Eunn den a-feson boc’h euz bet;

‘Azenorik, you sin [by such talk], you have got a respectable man.’ Nonetheless, the girl dies instead of living as wife to another man.

In *Jenovefa Rustefan*⁶¹ and *Markiz Gwerand*⁶², the girl also ends up dying because she cannot marry her love, although here the reason for the separation is different. Jenovefa

⁵⁶ Franz, 2011, p. 40.

⁵⁷ ‘Pale Azenor’, *BB*, pp. 242–8.

⁵⁸ ‘The Heiress of Keroulaz’, *BB*, pp. 293–9.

⁵⁹ ‘The Foster Brother’, *BB*, pp. 163–170.

⁶⁰ As marriage in the beginning of the nineteenth century played such an important part in a woman’s life, giving her status and respectability, a less preferable match was better than becoming an old maid (McMillan, 2000, p. 58).

⁶¹ *BB*, pp. 266–271.

Rustefan's beau is forced to become a priest by his mother. Although she has already had four boyfriends leave her for the priesthood, she says that losing this one will 'break her heart'. It is not clear what made her recover from the other losses and how long it took. She pleads with her Iannig to reconsider, although a few verses suggest that a part of her already accepted what is going to happen: she is making a lace to "*c'holoi eur chalir*" 'cover a chalice' – this suggests a chalice veil used during mass. In a way, this gesture is a sign of loyalty and faithfulness because instead of abandoning him when he breaks off their relationship, she gives him support in his planned vocation.

Her pleading further portrays her as a loyal companion:

– *Iannig ar Flecher, distroet endro,
Ha me roio d'hoc'h va holl vado;*

*Iannik, va mignon, distroet endro,
Ha me ielo d'hoc'h heul e pep bro;*

*Ha me gemero boteier koat,
Ha me iei gen-boc'h da labourat.*

'Iannig ar Flecher, come back and I'll give you all my goods. Iannig, my darling, come back and I'll follow you anywhere. And I'll take wooden clogs and come work with you.' She is offering to move anywhere and do manual labour.⁶³ She clearly does not see him as just an opportunity for a comfortable life as a housewife, but she loves him to the death. Talking of which, she then dies during his first mass, and he is often seen crying on her grave.

Markiz Gwerand is a story of a young woman whose boyfriend gets killed by a nobleman who has been harassing her. Afterwards, she goes home to her mother and tells her what has happened. She then says:

*C'houi a lavaro d'ar chlenzier,
Pa zeuio d'he ger'bat d'ar ger:*

« *Na daol tamm douar war he vez;
E berr va merc'h a iei ivez.* »

⁶² BB, pp. 311–5.

⁶³ "*va holl vado*" 'all my goods' might be an allusion to sex.

*Pa n'omp bet kousket er gwelead,
Ni gousko hon daou er toullad;*

*Pa n'omp bet eurenjet er bed,
Dirak Doue vimp eurenjet. –*

'You will tell the gravedigger who comes to take him home: "Do not throw any earth on his grave. Shortly, my daughter will go, too." Since we have not slept in a bed, we will sleep together in a hole. Since we have not been married in the world, we will be married in front of God.' Again, this shows that the girl is loyal beyond death.

These two songs feature a relationship that cannot be because of the man's celibacy and death respectively. The ballad of *Gwaŷ Aotrou Gwesklen*⁶⁴ features a relationship that cannot be because the man is already married. It forms only a small part of the story, but the maid's sudden love for the captured man is an interesting development. It may suggest a larger plot that is missing from Hersart's version. After the maid Biganna warns the captured man, thus saving his life, he offers her a reward. Instead, she asks him whether he is married. He replies that he got married only two weeks ago, but also mentions that he has three brothers, all of them even better than him. Biganna's answer shows great devotion to her new acquaintance:

*– D'am c'halon na blij den, na kennebeud arc'hant,
Na blij tra d'am c'halon, nemet hoc'h, aotro koant;*

'No-one pleases my heart and neither does money, no-one pleases my heart but you, handsome sir.' This is not the only instance in the *Barŷaŷ Breiŷ* of a woman in love with a man who has perhaps never considered her as a potential romantic partner. The *sonioù* section gives us *Ar Gwennilied*⁶⁵, which is a love song told from a woman's perspective.

There are two other ballads that are significant in terms of romantic relationships. These are *Livaden Geris*⁶⁶ and *Loiŷa hag Abalarŷ*⁶⁷. They both feature a girl turned to evil acts

⁶⁴ 'The Vassal of Lord Gwesklen', *BB*, pp. 221–6.

⁶⁵ 'The Swallows', *BB*, pp. 472–3.

⁶⁶ 'The Submersion of the City of Is', *BB*, pp. 39–42.

by her lover. *Livaden Geris* was already discussed above and *Loizga hag Abalard* will be discussed in detail in the dedicated chapter in Part 2. Regardless of the destruction they cause, they are both portrayed as particularly devoted girlfriends.

As mentioned above, the young women in the *sonioù* section are portrayed very differently. Of the ten songs featuring a female sweetheart and sufficient plot,⁶⁸ six are told from the point of view of a jilted man (*Son Ann Daol*⁶⁹, *Son Fest Miz Even*⁷⁰, *Ar C'hakous*⁷¹, *Melinerezh Pontaro*⁷², *Ar C'hloarek Paour*⁷³ and *Ann Drouk-Rans*⁷⁴), two are about a man falling in love with a woman with no indication whether he is going to be successful (*Son Al Leur-Nevez*⁷⁵ and *Kroaz Ann Hent*⁷⁶), one is about a mutual developing relationship (*Ann Hollaika*⁷⁷) and one is about a woman in love with a man who may not be aware of her (*Ar Gwenniled*⁷⁸). Of the ones featuring a jilted man, the overwhelming theme is that love is fleeting. *Ar C'hakous* contains a particularly vicious stanza:

*'Vel eunn aval e beg ar ween
E ma kalon ar femelen;
Kaer ve ann aval da welet,
Hag eur preuv e kreiz zo kuet.*

'The female heart is like an apple at the foot of the tree. It looks pretty, but there is a worm hidden inside.' Whether this is deserved or not is not clear to see. The woman earlier says:

*Den iaouang, eur gaou a leret!
Va c'halon d'hac'h, n'em euz roet;*

⁶⁷ 'Héloise and Abélard', *BB*, pp. 135–8.

⁶⁸ Marked "X" in Appendix 1.1 in this case.

⁶⁹ 'The Table Song', *BB*, pp. 420–422.

⁷⁰ 'The Song of the Feast of June', *BB*, p. 431–3.

⁷¹ 'The Leper', *BB*, pp. 454–6.

⁷² 'The Miller Woman of Pontaro', *BB*, pp. 457–9.

⁷³ 'The Poor Clerk', *BB*, pp. 463–5.

⁷⁴ 'The Breakup', *BB*, pp. 470–471.

⁷⁵ 'The New Floor', *BB*, pp. 435–7.

⁷⁶ 'The Crossroad', *BB*, pp. 468–9.

⁷⁷ *BB*, pp. 442–3.

⁷⁸ 'The Swallows', *BB*, pp. 472–3.

‘Young man, you’re telling a lie! I have not given you my heart.’ He is obviously convinced that she led him on, but we are not actually shown any evidence of this apart from his hurt feelings. However, regardless of whether she is at fault or not, this song does not portray women in a sympathetic way.

Melinerezh Pontaro is an interesting case in that the woman is not actually present in the story, even though she is at the heart of it. A young woman is kidnapped⁷⁹ by the miller, and her boyfriend (or so he thought) goes looking for her. The song is a conversation between the jilted boyfriend and the miller. The overwhelming impression is that the woman let herself be ‘kidnapped’ because she wants to be with the miller. As the miller says, although it is not entirely clear whether his mocking can be trusted:

*Hag e gane ken aliezh;
– Me garfe but milinerezh,*

‘And so often she would sing: I want to be a miller woman.’ Even though *milinerezh* can also be translated as a ‘miller’s wife’, technically there is no mention of marital status. It therefore makes the miller’s mocking a lot more nuanced because one needs to take an extra step to make the connection, which actually amplifies the effect of the mockery. Millers do not exactly have a clean reputation in folk songs, which in this case does not have any particular impact on the portrayal of the woman because while her association with someone in the milling profession does not reflect well on her, he is the one who is portrayed as the villain of the piece, meaning that he is assigned the majority of the blame for what has happened.

Despite the frequency of women ‘with a heart like a rotten apple’ in the *sonioù* section of the *Barzhaz Breiz*, there are some very positive portrayals of the men’s sweethearts. In *Son Al Leur-Nevez*, she has a smile “[h]ag eunn el euz ar baradouzh” ‘like an angel from paradise’ and in *Kroaz Ann Hent*, she is described as “eur plac’h evel ar zent” ‘a girl

⁷⁹ According to Natalie Anne Franz, in the *sonioù* tradition, kidnapping is not portrayed as a violent crime but instead as a technique used by young couples wishing to marry as a way of forcing their families to consent (Franz, 2011, p. 53).

like a saint’ – probably referring to her looks. In fact, this seems to be a very common aspect of the *sonioù* – the men only describe the women’s appearance, possibly because they do not know enough about them to talk about their character. They only start talking about the woman’s character after they are rejected. Descriptions of physical appearance in the Barzaz Breiz will be further discussed in a later section in the Themes chapter.

Rape

Different types of mistreatment of young women are exceedingly common in the *Barzaz Breiz*. Apart from forced or denied marriage discussed in previous sections, false accusation and near execution in *Itroun Varia Folgoat*⁸⁰ and murder by a romantic partner (*Kloarek Rohan*⁸¹ and *Seizzen Eured*⁸²), all the other instances involve rape or the threat of rape. In the case of *Seiziz Gwengamp*⁸³ and *Ar Re C’hlaz*⁸⁴, there is only a generic mention of rape: “*Gwallet gant-he hor meri’hed koant*” ‘They [the foreign soldiers] raped our pretty girls’.⁸⁵ Besides the main events in *Iannik Skolan*⁸⁶, we are also told that he ‘raped three of his sisters’, but we are not told any more about them.

In the other ballads, some basic patterns emerge. In the case of *Fillloez Ann Aotrou Gwesklen*⁸⁷, *Emzivadex Lannion*⁸⁸ and *Iannik Skolan*, the actual rape does not take place, but the girl is killed. In the first two of these ballads, the girl clearly states that she prefers death to rape, in the manner of the Breton motto “*Potius mori quam foedari*” or “*Kentoc’h ar marv eget*

⁸⁰ ‘Our Lady of Folgoat’, *BB*, pp. 273–8.

⁸¹ ‘The Clerk of Rohan’, *BB*, pp. 173–182. Technically, this ballad deals with a married woman.

⁸² ‘The Wedding Belt’, *BB*, pp. 234–240. This murdered woman is also technically married, but she is killed by her former fiancé.

⁸³ ‘The Siege of Gwengamp’, *BB*, pp. 258–260.

⁸⁴ ‘The Blue Ones’, *BB*, pp. 374–9.

⁸⁵ *Ar Re C’hlaz*.

⁸⁶ *BB*, pp. 341–9.

⁸⁷ ‘The Goddaughter of Lord Gwesklen’, *BB*, pp. 212–9.

⁸⁸ ‘The Orphan Girl of Lannion’, *BB*, pp. 322–5.

ar vastarenn’ ‘Death before dishonour’. In *Filllorez Ann Aotrou Gwesken*, the girl kills herself, proclaiming:

*Enn abeg d’hoc’h, Gwerc’hez Vari
Me a varvo gwerc’hez heb si.*

‘Because of you, Virgin Mary, I will die a virgin, without vice.’ Similarly, in *Emzivadez Lannion*, when repeatedly harassed for sex (and asked to extinguish her lantern in order to make darkness), the servant girl says:

*Me ho ped, maltoterien, pezet ar vadelezh,
D’am zeurel e-kreiz ar mor kent eit kement c’bloez!*

‘I’m begging you, customs officers, have the kindness to toss me into the sea rather than such [moral] injury.’ They kill her, and her body is discovered with “[h]e letern enn he c’hichen, ha beo he goulo” ‘her lantern next to her still alight’, suggesting that she has indeed died a virgin.⁸⁹

Although Morised in *Iannik Skolan* does not have time to make any such proclamations before she is brutally murdered by Iannik because she ‘would not give [him] a kiss’, she is described as a particularly moral and good person. When she is first introduced, we are told that she “[n]e doa d’ei sonj nemed de vad” ‘only had good in her thoughts’. After her death, her good character is mentioned again: “Hi a oe ur plac’h diget Doue” ‘She was a girl from God’.

In the case of *Pardon Saint-Fiakr*⁹⁰, the girl is saved from rape by her friend Loeizik, who is then killed by his friends – the aggressors. The ballad does not offer any characterization of the girl apart from the fact that she has been friends with Loeizik since childhood. She is not mentioned again after this episode.⁹¹

⁸⁹ See Georges Duby and Michelle Perrot, *Histoire des femmes en Occident : Tome 3, XVIe-XVIIIe siècle*, Librairie Académique Perrin, Paris, 2002, pp. 173–4 for a connection between virginity and liberty in Catholic Europe.

⁹⁰ ‘The Pardon of Saint Fiakr’, *BB*, pp. 350–355.

⁹¹ Interestingly enough, any such woman is absent from the actual criminal case of the murder of Loeiz ar Ravallec on which this story is based. This is studied in detail by Donatien Laurent in “La gwerzh de Louis Le Ravallec. Enquête sur un crime de 1732.”, *ArMen* 7 (February 1987).

The following two ballads feature rape in more detail. In *Marzin Enn He Gavel*⁹², a young girl (referred to as “*merc’hik roue*” ‘princess’, although that might simply be flattery) is lured into a forest in a dream by a talking bird with what can best be described as the gift of the tweet. She arrives at the house of a *Duzik* ‘black spirit’, and because he is not in, she comes inside. A dove knocks on the window, the girl naively lets it in, and we get a very euphemistic depiction of rape:

*Gwech war va skoaz, gwech war va fenn,
Gwech e nije war va c’herc’henn.*

*Teir gwech ouz va skoarn a bokaz
Ha kuit dreo enn-dro d’ar c’boat glaz.*

*Mar oa dreo hi, ne n’am onn ket;
Malloz d’ann heur e oann kousket.*

*Ann dour a ver diouz va lagad
Pa dleann kavel luskellat.*

‘First on my shoulder, then on my head, then it flew on my neck. It kissed my ear three times and went merrily into the green woods. If it was merry, I was not – curse on the time when I fell asleep. Tears fall from my eyes now that I have to rock a cradle.’ In this scene, the dove’s hectic flying around the room and hitting the girl’s various body parts clearly suggests a violent attack. The fourth stanza makes clear that the result of this episode is a baby – little Merlin, in fact. Partly due to the fact that this song is in the first person, we get very little characterization apart from the girl referring to her naivety and inexperience on a few occasions, as can be seen, for example, from “Sioaz! sioaz d’am iaouankiz!” ‘Cursed be my youth!’

*Ann Tri Manac’h Ru*⁹³ is a much darker tale, even though it shares several elements with the previous song and does not tell us much about the actual rape, although it is clearly implied. Three monks⁹⁴ encounter a young girl. They invite her to come with them

⁹² ‘Merlin in his Cradle’, *BB*, pp. 57–61.

⁹³ ‘The Three Red Monks’, *BB*, pp. 184–8.

⁹⁴ They are probably from some kind of military order, as the girl refers to their *kleze* ‘swords’.

to their abbey, offering her endless riches. She refuses, saying that she is scared of them and that she has heard of seven young girls who never came out of there. And so they kidnap her instead. The next thing we are told is:

*Hag a-benn seiz pe eiz miç pe 'nn dra bennag goude,
Hi a oe souezet braç barç ann abati-ze;*

‘And in seven or eight months or a little bit after that, they got a big surprise in this abbey.’ The evasive time-telling draws attention to itself, pointing us in the direction of nine months and therefore the duration of human pregnancy. The horrific crime, although clearly implied, gets no description whatsoever. They then start talking about burying the girl alive, which they do after the girl pleads for her life for a while. A knight who secretly witnesses this scene then hears the girl express a concern from within her improvised grave:

...
– *Me garfe d’am c’hrouadur oleo ar vadian;*

*Ha goude ar groaz-n-oen evid-onn ma unan,
Ha mervel a rin laouen a galon vad breman.*

‘I would like baptism oil for my little one and last rites for myself. Then I shall die happy and courageous.’ This portrays her as a good Christian and a responsible mother.

When her corpse is rescued from the tomb, we are told that she scratched a hole in her chest right to her heart. It is not clear whether this is significant, but the mention of her heart seems to emphasise the positive portrayal of this poor victim. The bishop spends three nights and days praying, after which the baby comes back to life and identifies the culprits.

Rape is a common plot element in the *Barzañ Breiz*, and the overwhelming theme is the young girl’s moral integrity supported by choosing death over degradation. It is clear from the portrayal of these unfortunate girls that these songs pass no moral judgement on

the woman's behaviour. Interestingly enough, the ballad of *Ar Breur Mager*⁹⁵ does not feature rape in Hersart's version. Its counterparts in other collections are very much about rape or sexual intercourse and include a very subtle instance of victim blaming, whereas these aspects are missing from *Ar Breur Mager*. This will be discussed in detail in Part 2.

⁹⁵ 'The Foster Brother', *BB*, pp. 163–170.

1.2. Wife

For those women in the *Barzañ Breiz* who successfully reach this stage, new challenges lie ahead. Although the prevalence of young girls in the *Barzañ Breiz* is so high, many interesting characters are, in fact, married women or mothers. This chapter will discuss the portrayal of married women. Fiancées are also included, as it is not always possible to separate the two stages, and as the Breton word *dimezet* can mean both ‘engaged’ and ‘married’, a clear division between the two is not always intended.⁹⁶

Loyal wife

There is a clear pattern in the *Barzañ Breiz* in the way that a large number of wives are portrayed as not only faithful but also extremely loyal to their husbands. There are several exceptions to this rule, which will be studied below. In terms of loyal fiancées, several have already been discussed in the previous chapter. In a similar fashion, in both *Aotrou Nann hag Ar Gorrigan*⁹⁷ and *Fontanella*⁹⁸, following the death of her husband, the wife dies of a broken heart.

In *Aotrou Nann hag Ar Gorrigan*, the wife is initially not told of her husband’s death, as per his last wish. Her ignorance of the events of the previous night and the tragedy therein are emphasised in the following two stanzas:

– *Va mamm-gaer geaz livirit d’in,
Ruẓpe c’hlaz d’ann iliz ez inn?*

– *Va merc’hik deuet eo ar c’hez
Da vont gwisket du d’ann iliz. –*

⁹⁶ See Chapter 2.2 for more information on this particular Breton word.

⁹⁷ ‘Lord Nann and the Fairy’, *BB*, pp. 25–8.

⁹⁸ *BB*, pp. 288–292.

‘My dear mother-in-law, tell me: shall I go to church dressed in red or in blue? My dear daughter, there is a new custom of going to church dressed in black.’ When she sees her husband’s grave, we are told that:

*War he daou-lin en em strinkaz
Ha biken goude na zavas.*

‘She threw herself on her knees and never rose again.’ Her body is then put into her husband’s grave. The following day, two oaks miraculously appear growing from their grave. On a branch in these trees are two happy doves who fly off together to heaven. This beautiful image suggests loyalty beyond death.

The wife in *Fontanella* also dies, probably of a broken heart. Her husband travels to Paris despite her warning about sensing danger. He is then imprisoned by the king, and he sends a page to bring his wife. There is no description of her reaction to the news, but the next scene in the song is about her arrival in Paris. She is described here as “*itron a bell vro*” ‘a lady from far away’, and we get an image of Parisians surprised at her arrival. The following stanza contains the same narrative technique as the previous song. We are told that she is wearing a “*ze c’blaz*” ‘blue dress’, whereas, had she known, she would have worn a “*[b]roz du-pek*” ‘pitch-black skirt’. This has the same effect of emphasising the tragedy and, in this case, also of foreshadowing the next part of the plot.

She asks the king to release her husband, but she is told that he was executed three days previously. Yet again, the song does not give us any reaction to the news; instead, there is another change of scene and we are told that hers and Fontanella’s home is deserted and that the “*mamm ar beorien*” ‘mother of the poor’, supposedly meaning her, is dead. Although this lack of description of highly emotional scenes seems to be unusual for the *Barzaz Breiz*, the result is a very poignant tragedy with a clear message about the wife’s loyalty to her husband. Interestingly enough, seeing as she was originally kidnapped by Fontanella when she was a child and then placed in a convent until she was fourteen and therefore old enough to marry him, this ballad may actually be a depiction of what we

would today call Stockholm syndrome. However, there is no more mention of her kidnapping after the first part of the plot is concluded, and Fontanella is described as “*Pravan map a wiskas dillad*” ‘the handsomest man who has ever worn clothes’. He also seems to be on particularly good terms with the poor people; therefore, there is no reason why a woman should not love him.⁹⁹

Another tragic fate awaits the wife in *Kloarek Rohan*¹⁰⁰. A young girl from the Rohan family is at an age when she needs to choose a husband. Among the many knights and barons, she chooses baron Vaze, because he is “*leal ha gwirion*” ‘loyal and sincere’. Although this is a characterization of her husband, it reflects well on her because it shows that she has virtuous priorities. After a few years, he needs to leave and go to ‘war in the east’ – probably a crusade. She does not want him to go, she cries and tells him to stay. She is described as “*itron fur*” ‘a good/well-behaved woman/lady’. He leaves her under the protection of his cousin the clerk. Afterwards, things go from bad to worse. He keeps tempting her to be unfaithful to her husband and she keeps refusing. He lies to her, suggesting that her husband is unfaithful and perhaps not coming back, but she never loses faith in him. She is very direct – she tells the clerk:

– *Ser da vek, kloarek milliget!*
Lenn eo da galon a bec’hed;

‘Shut up, you damned clerk! Your heart is full of sin.’ His reaction is to kill something belonging to the husband, after which he would secretly write him a letter telling him that she caused it by means of some minor accident. Each rejection brings about a bigger death and a more serious story.

After the clerk writes that she accidentally caused the death of the husband’s favourite dog while on a hunt, the husband replies that they can get another dog and that she should not worry. However, he adds that she should not go on a chase too often,

⁹⁹ This seems more reminiscent of the way kidnapping is portrayed in the *sonioù* tradition (Franz, 2011, p. 53).

¹⁰⁰ ‘The Clerk of Rohan’, *BB*, pp. 173–182.

because the hunters are *direiṣ* ‘disorderly’. With each event, his suspicion grows. After his favourite horse’s legs are broken because she allegedly went to a dance, he replies “*Ne ked hebken diou-sker ronsed. Torri priejou a ve gret.*” ‘this [kind of behaviour] does not only break horses’ legs, but also marriages’. Next time, the clerk does not use deception in order to tempt her – he threatens her with death. She refuses him again, saying that ‘[she] would much prefer to die rather than commit a mortal sin’. And so the clerk kills her baby son and writes to the husband that the baby died because instead of watching over him, she was with her lover.

This news makes the husband return immediately. He kills the clerk for not looking after his wife, and then he kills the wife for her alleged unfaithfulness. He then asks the priest about what actually happened. The priest tells of a vision of the wife’s ghost on her grave. She is described as “*itron wenn*” ‘a white lady’ – white colour suggesting innocence. The dog, horse and baby are with her and on particularly good terms with her. After the moon sets, the vision disappears, and all that is left is a nightingale ‘singing the song of paradise’.

Her constant direct refusal of the clerk’s approaches makes it clear that she is a very moral and faithful wife. It is probably why the clerk needed more than a simple accusation to turn the husband against her. Although unfaithfulness is a principal theme in this song, the female protagonist is certainly not guilty of it.

The *kanouñ relijiel* ‘religious songs’ section of the *Barṣaṣ Breiṣ* contains two particularly interesting examples of loyal wives. In *Sant Efflamm hag Ar Roue Arzur*¹⁰¹, after Efflamm leaves “*he c’hroueg vad*” ‘his good wife’ on the night of their wedding and goes to Brittany to become a hermit, she sees a vision of him in a dream telling her to follow him. She answers the vision: “*Mont a rinn gan-e-hoc’h, va fried; Lec’h a gerefel*” ‘I will go with you wherever you want, my spouse.’ She then becomes a hermit as well. They live in neighbouring huts, performing minor miracles and helping people, until much later when

¹⁰¹ ‘Saint Efflamm and King Arthur’, *BB*, pp. 483–8.

they both die of old age on the same day. It shows a lot of devotion for an Irish princess to leave home and live as a poor hermit because of a man to whom she was married for less than a day. They obviously do not have a romantic marriage anymore, but the bond between them is very apparent.

In *Tour Ann Arvor*¹⁰², lady Azenor is married to a man who comes with an entourage to ask for her hand. After the wedding, he asks her whether she wants to go home with him. In the manner of the previous song, she answers “*Lec’h a iefec’h me iei ivez*” ‘wherever you go, I will go too’. They have only just met, but Azenor is fully devoted to her new husband. Her husband’s stepmother takes a dislike to her and accuses her of unfaithfulness. The husband believes the slander, and despite the fact that she is about to give birth, she is to be executed – first by burning, and when that does not work, by drowning, but this leads to her and the child being lost in the sea. When his stepmother is dying, she confesses the truth, after which he goes looking for her. After he finally finds her in her new life as a *kannerez* ‘washerwoman’ in Britain,¹⁰³ she takes him back despite the fact that he ordered her to be executed, and the three of them return to Brittany and live as a happy family.

Alongside these numerous examples of almost irrationally loyal and faithful wives, the *Barzaez Breiz* contains a few songs with instances of unfaithfulness and adultery that are not just untruthful slander. However, the only one that leaves no room for excuses for the woman’s behaviour is *Ann Eostik*¹⁰⁴. An old husband repeatedly asks his wife why she so often leaves the bed at night. She gives a series of false answers including going to see the baby in the cradle. She then claims to finally tell the truth, inventing a story about a nightingale to which she likes to listen at night.¹⁰⁵ The husband acts fast, kills the bird and

¹⁰² ‘The Tower of Arvor’, *BB*, pp. 491–8.

¹⁰³ Hersart claims that “*enez vraz*” can either refer to Britain or Iceland.

¹⁰⁴ ‘The Nightingale’, *BB*, pp. 151–4.

¹⁰⁵ The nightingale sits on a “*bodik-ros*” ‘rose bush’. Roses are a common metaphor for sex in Breton. See also *Kloarek Robar*: “*a b lant eur rozen er maner*” ‘[they] plant a rose in the manor’, i.e. ‘they cheat on you in your own house’.

gives it to his “*greg iaouank*” ‘young wife’. The last two stanzas contain a conversation between the wife and her lover saying that now they cannot meet any more “*Vel ma oamp boazet da ober*” ‘as [they] were in the habit of doing’, leaving no doubt about her adultery.

*Seizen Eured*¹⁰⁶ is not as much about adultery or unfaithfulness as it is about a lack of that same level of loyalty and devotion as we saw above. A young man has to go to sea, so in the evening before his departure, he goes to see his sweetheart. She begs him not to go:

– *Han Doue! ma den-iaouank, na eet ket war ann dour;
Ann avel a zo edro hag ar mor zo traitour.*

‘In the name of God, my young man/fiancé, do not go to sea. The wind is fickle and the sea is treacherous.’ Although asking the man not to go into danger is a feature shared with the songs depicting loyal women, the message here is soon reversed when the man leaves her house in the morning.¹⁰⁷

Evid ar mor bout traitour, traitouroc’h ar merc’hed.

‘If the sea is treacherous, women even more so.’ This foreshadows the next development. However, the song contains an excuse or explanation for what is to follow.

The young woman sees a vessel far away under attack. Everyone is killed except her boyfriend, whose shirt is “*leun a vad*” ‘soaked in blood’. She therefore assumes that he is going to die, and she gets engaged again. Unfortunately for her, he comes back on the night of her wedding and kills her. It is understandable that she thought him dead, but based on what she saw of the battle on the sea (she watched it from a mountain), she could not have been certain and should have had more hope. The fact that she got engaged again so soon after she presumed him dead suggests a flaw in her character.

*Ar Plac’h Dimezet Gand Satan*¹⁰⁸ is also about a woman who breaks off an engagement (or two). On the one hand, she has no excuse for doing so, and on the other

¹⁰⁶ ‘The Wedding Belt’, *BB*, pp. 234–240.

¹⁰⁷ The song is very clear about the fact that they spend the night sitting by the fire together, embracing, crying and waiting for the morning.

¹⁰⁸ ‘The woman married to Satan’, *BB*, pp. 157–161.

hand, the song offers us so little information on what she has actually done apart from stating that ‘whoever gets engaged three times without getting married goes to hell to burn’. Since she burns in hell, we can assume that that was her sin. Her portrayal is confused, but she is clearly an example of a disloyal fiancée.¹⁰⁹

The vast majority of wives and fiancées in the *Barzaz Breiz* are portrayed as faithful and loyal beyond death and fully devoted to their husbands. This idea goes in hand with Ernest Legouvé’s claim that a woman’s highest virtue is her devotion to her husband.¹¹⁰ The small number of songs dealing with unfaithfulness do not seem to be particularly vicious in their portrayal of the guilty women. This idea will be discussed further in the chapter dedicated to *Ar Plac’h Dimezet Gand Satan*.

Strong wife, weak wife

The *Barzaz Breiz* contains examples of both wives with tremendous strength, taking care of the situation either alongside their husbands or instead of them, but also wives who are lost without their husbands and need to be rescued. There therefore does not seem to be an overwhelming pattern for a wife’s strength.

There are numerous examples of strong wives in the domestic sphere in cases where the husband is not technically absent, but abstaining from any major decisions about the family.¹¹¹ However, this theme becomes interesting when it is taken a little further from the usual family matters. The most striking example of a strong wife is contained in *Bosen Elliant*¹¹². We are given an image of a mother pulling a cart containing her nine dead sons while her husband is “*adren o c’houibannat: Kollet gat-ban he skiant-vad*” ‘[following] behind, whistling: he lost his reason’. It is possible that this strength might rather come from her

¹⁰⁹ See Chapter 2.2 for a detailed study of this song.

¹¹⁰ McMillan, 2000, p. 52.

¹¹¹ This is not necessarily surprising, as arranging marriages was considered the mother’s job (Franz, 2011, p. 140).

¹¹² ‘The Plague of Elliant’, *BB*, pp. 52–4.

maternal role, but it is clear that her husband is not much help at this point, and she has to be the strong one.

In *Ar Falc'bon*¹¹³, Kado¹¹⁴ leads a revolt against the oppressive upper classes, and “*He c’hreg gant-han er penn a-rok, Gant hi war he skoa zeou eur c’hrog*” ‘his wife [is] with him at the front with a hook [weapon] on her right shoulder’. She fights alongside her husband, although she later states that she does it in order to give her children a better future, so this might be an example of a mother’s strength instead.

In *Seziz Gwengamp*¹¹⁵, the gunner is wounded and his wife offers to take his place and load the guns instead of him. She talks of “*Tan ha kurun*” ‘fire and thunder’, suggesting that she is very confident about this plan. There is no mention of any children, and so this is an example of a very strong and resourceful wife.

Not every woman in the *Barzaz Breiz* can manage without her husband, however. The wife in *Greg Ar C’broazour*¹¹⁶ is left with her husband’s brother-in-law¹¹⁷ while he is gone on a crusade. Instead of the promised treatment with dignity, she is forced to live in a stable and take animals to pasture. After seven years, her husband returns. She does not recognise him at first, but he learns of her situation and goes to have a word with his relation who promised to take such good care of her. The only reason why he does not kill him is because he does not want to sully the house of his parents. Her husband is back and everything is well again. We are not told of any resistance whatsoever on the wife’s part. In fact, there is a suggestion that she finally accepts her lot just before her husband comes back:

¹¹³ ‘The Hawk’, *BB*, pp. 130–133.

¹¹⁴ Simply a man called Kado, not the saint, although Saint Kado also gets a mention in this song.

¹¹⁵ ‘The Siege of Gwengamp’, *BB*, pp. 258–260.

¹¹⁶ ‘The Crusader’s Wife’, *BB*, pp. 146–9.

¹¹⁷ There is a minor confusion about family relations in this song stemming from the fact that both the woman and her husband refer to the supposed guardian as *breur* ‘brother’. The husband calls him “*breur-kaer*” ‘brother-in-law’, suggesting that he is his brother-in-law and therefore possibly her brother, although he might also be the husband of any of the husband’s siblings, which seems likely (none are mentioned, however). The fact that “*breur-kaer*” technically means ‘dear brother’ certainly does not help.

*Bet eo epad seiz vloa, ne re nemet goela;
Enn divez ar seiz vloa 'n em lakaz da gana.*

‘For seven years, all she did was cry, and at the end of the seventh year, she started singing.’

The wife in *Kloarek Rohan*¹¹⁸ would also benefit from such rescue. She, however, shows more strength, as seen from her rejection of the immoral clerk. It seems that there is little that she could do to turn the situation in her favour. Although Azenor in *Tour Ann Arvor*¹¹⁹ is eventually found by her husband, she is not portrayed as someone who needs rescuing. She has a job and leads a normal, albeit simple life. This suggests independence.

*Ann Amzer Dremenet*¹²⁰ contains a story of a mother of nine whose life becomes difficult when she becomes a widow. We are not told of what happened to her husband. She asks the lord for food but is refused. She then encounters another lord who is more in touch with the traditions, and he gives her some money. She then swears allegiance to the generous lord. The fact that she finds herself in financial difficulty after her husband’s death may seem like a sign of dependence and therefore weakness. However, it seems to be a perfectly natural situation in terms of the sociohistorical context,¹²¹ and her action brings a satisfactory solution to her family’s problem.

The *Barza Breiz* clearly contains wives with all kinds of level of strength and independence, and although some minor patterns emerge, they seem to be contradictory and not present in a sufficiently large number of songs in order to lead to any solid conclusions in terms of the portrayal of a wife’s independence and resourcefulness in the *Barza Breiz*.

¹¹⁸ ‘The Clerk of Rohan’, *BB*, pp. 173–182.

¹¹⁹ ‘The Tower of Arvor’, *BB*, pp. 491–8.

¹²⁰ ‘The Old Times’, *BB*, pp. 397–404.

¹²¹ See Duby, 2002, Vol. 3, pp. 59–64 for a discussion of the difficulties faced by a widow as opposed to a widower.

Widow

Widows are surprisingly uncommon in the *Barzaz Breiz*. Apart from the examples above where a woman is widowed at the end of the story and incidentally also near the end of her own life, the widow mentioned in *Ann Amzer Dremenet*¹²² and a few generic mentions of widows with no associated plot (*Paotred Plouieo*¹²³ and *Ar Baradoz*¹²⁴),¹²⁵ there are only three other songs in which a widow makes a sufficiently detailed appearance.

*Maronad Ann Aotrou Nevet*¹²⁶ and *Eur Gentel Vad*¹²⁷ are both ballads featuring wives whose husband dies. They are both seen mourning. They are described as “*Nn Itron warlerc’h, gwisket e du, War he daou-lin, oc’h oela dru*” ‘the lady behind, dressed in black, on her knees crying heavily’ and “*Ar he daoulin, enn eur oelo*” ‘on her knees, crying’ respectively. Nevet’s wife is also seen crying at her husband’s death bed; however, these women do not feature in any other parts of these songs. Interestingly, the depiction of their mourning is almost identical, even though the first was married to a man portrayed as a wonderful person beloved by all (“*otrou Nevet benniget*” ‘blessed/holy Lord Nevet’), and the second was married to a common drunk who died as a result of his addiction (“*[d]ebret... [g]ad er vleiz*” ‘eaten by wolves’).

In contrast, *Son Fest Ann Arvel*¹²⁸ from the *sonion* section features a young widow approached by a young man who wants to marry her. He uses the rose metaphor for sex and romance:

*Ar rozen hag al louzon fin
Zo mad da lakat er jardin.*

¹²² ‘The Old Times’, *BB*, pp. 397–404.

¹²³ ‘The Men of Plouieo’, *BB*, pp. 251–6.

¹²⁴ ‘Paradise’, *BB*, pp. 514–7.

¹²⁵ Technically, the mother in *Pen-Herez Keroulaz* (‘The Heiress of Keroulaz’, *BB*, pp. 293–9) is also widowed, but there is no mention of the fact and it does not seem to play any part in the plot.

¹²⁶ ‘The Elegy of Lord Nevet’, *BB*, pp. 316–321.

¹²⁷ ‘A Good Lesson’, *BB*, pp. 386–390.

¹²⁸ ‘The Song of the Feast of the Cupboard’, *BB*, pp. 427–9.

‘The rose and fine herbs have their place in the garden.’ By this, he is suggesting that she should remarry. She turns his metaphor around to give him a definitive answer, but not the one that he wants:

*Ar rozen zo mad d’ar jardin,
D’ar vered ar wezen ivin;
Kemeret am euz da bried
Ann hini neuз krouet ar bed.*

‘The rose has its place in the garden and the ivy in the churchyard. I have taken for a husband the one who created the world.’ She wants to become a nun. Interestingly, there is no mention of her deceased husband or any connected expression of grief. However, she tells the young man that she shall pray for him (the suitor) and her to find each other in paradise, which shows at least some kind of friendship or affection towards him, making the absence of grief over the death of her husband perhaps a little surprising. However, she appears at peace, and therefore it is possible that she has already concluded her grieving.

Widows in the *Barzaз Breiz* share a lot of ground with loyal wives. The principal theme seems to be extreme grieving, sometimes leading to death by broken heart. Although *Ann Amzer Dremenet* or *Son Fest Ann Arvel* do not feature explicit grief, they do not rule it out, and none of the widows in the *Barzaз Breiz* are portrayed in a negative light.

1.3. Mother

Mothers are far more frequently represented in the *Barzaz Breiz* than fathers. This may be due to their greater influence on education of their children and on other aspects of the domestic sphere.¹²⁹ Despite McMillan's mention of the mother's particular influence over the education of her daughters¹³⁰, the *Barzaz Breiz* seems to place far greater importance on the relationship between mothers and sons.

Mourning mother

Compared to the limited number of widows in the *Barzaz Breiz*, there is an very high number of mourning mothers. This may be in part explained by the fact that the majority of the songs contained in the *Barzaz Breiz* are *gwerzjoù* and therefore about tragedies.¹³¹ The death of a child is an unnatural loss and therefore more worthy of the genre.

Despite the number of deceased girls in the *Barzaz Breiz*, there is only one song featuring a mother mourning the loss of her daughter. The mother in *Penn-Herez Keroulaz*¹³² admits to feeling guilt over her daughter's death and decides to dedicate the rest of her life to God. The other deceased women do not seem to have their parents present when they die or no mention is given to their mourning.

However, mothers mourning deceased sons are depicted in several songs. The mother of *Lez-Breiz*¹³³ dies “*gand ar c'hlac'har*” ‘[of] sorrow’ after her son leaves and is

¹²⁹ McMillan, 2000, p. 50.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ Franz, 2011, p. 93.

¹³² ‘The Heiress of Keroulaz’, *BB*, pp. 293–9.

¹³³ *BB*, pp. 80–105.

presumed dead. When Silvestik does not return after three years in *Ann Distro Euṣ A Vro-Zaoṣ*¹³⁴, his mother says goodbye to him:

– *Kenavo d'id, Silvestik, ne n'aṣ gwelinn ket mui;
Mar kaffenn da eskern paour tolet gand ar mare,
Oh! me ho dastumefe hag ho briatefe.* –

'Goodbye to you, Silvestik, I shall see you no more. If I find your poor bones spread out by the tide, oh, I will collect them and embrace them.' This is a very powerful image. The mother is clearly aching for a proper goodbye.

When the mother of *Bran*¹³⁵ learns of his death, she is described as "*o oela ken*" 'crying so much' and "*[o]c'h ober kanv hed ar stread*" 'mourning all along the street'. When she sees her son's body, she throws herself onto it "*[h]a bikenn goude na ṣavaṣ*" 'and never rises again'.

*Bosen Elliant*¹³⁶ provides an even more sombre image. A mother has to pull a cart with the bodies of her nine sons who perished in the plague. There is no-one left to bury the cadavers, and so she begs God to do it, promising him a very long cord of wax in return. She says that she gave birth to nine sons, but now they are all dead. In her current predicament, there would be no place for any more sentimental display of grief, and this subtle manner gets the message across sufficiently.

There are two further mentions of mourning mothers, albeit a lot less detailed. In *Ar Rannon*¹³⁷, there is a one-verse mention of "*nao mamm o keina meur*" 'nine mothers weeping bitterly'. The fact that these women are described as mothers suggests that their grief is related to their maternal role: they are therefore grieving the loss of their children. The gender of these children is unknown. In *Kanaouen Al Levier*¹³⁸, there is a mention of everyone cheering except for "*mammou paour*" 'poor mothers', suggesting that some sailors

¹³⁴ 'The Return from England', *BB*, pp. 141–4.

¹³⁵ *BB*, pp. 123–8.

¹³⁶ 'The Plague of Elliant', *BB*, pp. 52–4.

¹³⁷ 'The Series', *BB*, pp. 2–9.

¹³⁸ 'Pilot's Song', *BB*, pp. 356–361.

did not come back. Interestingly enough, *Aotrou Nann hag Ar Gorrigan*¹³⁹ does not feature a grieving mother. It is perhaps because she promised to keep his death a secret, and therefore she cannot appear publicly grieving lest Nann's wife discovers the truth.

Grief over the loss of a child, in most cases a son, is a frequent theme in the *Barzaaz Breiz*. There do not seem to be any features of grief particular to the *Barzaaz Breiz* – most mourning mothers weep and some embrace their children's remains, some die of sorrow, but there does not seem to be anything unique about these portrayals.

Strong mother

Strong mothers are present in the *Barzaaz Breiz* in many varieties. Some have already been discussed in terms of their strength in their role as a wife, some exhibit a great degree of authority in terms of deciding their children's future,¹⁴⁰ and some possess a superior level of strength and resourcefulness. Nann's mother in *Aotrou Nann hag Ar Gorrigan*¹⁴¹ proves to be very resourceful when she maintains secrecy about Nann's death despite the very obvious funeral and the wife's questions. The fact that she tells her the truth does not seem to suggest any failing on her part, because at that point, the wife already sees the grave, and lying any longer would have been pointless.

The most emphatic example of a strong and resourceful mother in the *Barzaaz Breiz* is the mother in *Marzin-Barz*¹⁴². The supposed hero of this tale is her son; however, he is portrayed as less than heroic, and she helps him on every step of the way. First, his mother advises him against going to the king's festival on account of his 'crying throughout the night'. He decides to ignore her advice. At the festival, the king announces a race with the king's daughter as first prize. He wins the race, but seemingly only thanks to his horse. Instead of receiving the princess, the king and his advisor come up with a series of quests,

¹³⁹ 'Lord Nann and the Fairy', *BB*, pp. 25–8.

¹⁴⁰ In line with social expectation (Franz, 2011, p. 140).

¹⁴¹ 'Lord Nann and the Fairy', *BB*, pp. 25–8.

¹⁴² 'Merlin the Bard', *BB*, pp. 63–73.

all of which involve stealing various items from Merlin the Bard and then finally bringing Merlin himself. Every time, the lad comes back home crying, but the mother always knows how to solve the problem. She possesses magical artefacts and knows about herbs and magical concoctions. Every quest is successfully completed, and the lad is finally given the princess, and Merlin celebrates with them at the wedding feast.

She is described as a woman of a certain age. The word “goz” ‘old’ is used on several occasions. When her son comes back crying the first time, she makes sure to remind him of her advice not to go because otherwise there will be tears. Nevertheless, she tells him: “*Ma mabik paour, na oelet ke!*” ‘My poor son, do not cry.’ She repeats this sentence on several occasions in various permutations. This portrays her as a very decisive and yet caring mother. She always knows immediately what to do and succeeds in outsmarting Merlin on several occasions. She outshines other strong mothers in the *Barza Breiz* in that she possesses a wide variety of positive characteristics that complement each other. She is decisive; however, unlike the decisive mothers in *Fillorez Ann Aotrou Gwesklen*¹⁴³ and *Penn-Herez Keroulaz*¹⁴⁴, she lets her child defy her authority in order to teach him a lesson by letting him go to the festival even though it will make him cry. This suggests wisdom and foresight.

Stepmother

The characters of stepmothers are not missing from the *Barza Breiz*. Both examples share similar features. The stepmother in *Ar Breur Mager*¹⁴⁵ is portrayed as a cruel and unsympathetic person. She is not described by any negative words, but her actions clearly show cruelty against the girl: she makes her work very hard, and she forces her to marry Jobig the Lunatic. Her manner of addressing the girl is unkind (“*It d’en em glemm er*

¹⁴³ ‘The Goddaughter of Lord Gwesklen’, *BB*, pp. 212–9.

¹⁴⁴ ‘The Heiress of Keroulaz’, *BB*, pp. 293–9.

¹⁴⁵ ‘The Foster Brother’, *BB*, pp. 163–170.

porz...” ‘Go complain in the courtyard’). Further, we also learn that when the girl is marrying Jobig, everyone is crying except for the stepmother. This shows her as a heartless person.

The stepmother of Azenor’s husband in *Tour Ann Arvor*¹⁴⁶ is portrayed through considerably more direct language. As soon as Azenor appears on the scene, we are told that the stepmother “*[g]and ann erez-tag a vougaʒ*” ‘was smothered by choking jealousy’. She uses a metaphor featuring a new key and an old key, which suggests that she is feeling threatened by Azenor. She therefore decides to lie to her stepson, convincing him of Azenor’s unfaithfulness. Similarly to the fashion of *Ar Breur Mager*, when Azenor is about to be executed, everyone is weeping except for the stepmother. When the stepmother finally admits her deception, she is killed by a serpent that came out of her mouth. The serpent symbolises the devil.

The fact that the portrayal of the stepmother is negative in both cases is not surprising. This is a feature shared by many folk tales, and stepmothers were regarded with suspicion even beyond the realms of songs and stories.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁶ ‘The Tower of Arvor’, *BB*, pp. 491–8.

¹⁴⁷ The principal reason was the fact that stepmothers were expected to favour their own children. (Duby, 2002, Vol. 3, p. 59).

1.4. Themes

Religion

While Catholicism clearly played a role in shaping Hersart's beliefs as well as the customs for portraying characters in line with what is considered as being a 'good Christian', the *Barzaz Breiz* also contains direct references to religion. Most characters in the *Barzaz Breiz* are portrayed as religious to some extent, which is to be expected, as the Catholic faith played a very important role in people's lives in Brittany in the previous centuries. This is particularly apparent in the case of female characters.¹⁴⁸ References to church-going or mentions of saints are common throughout the songs. Some characters, however, seem to have a much deeper inner religious life. In several cases, we also get a saint as a character in a story beyond the *kanou relijiel* 'religious songs' section of the *Barzaz Breiz*. In several ballads, a saint – coincidentally female in all of them – gives help to a particularly religious character. Interestingly enough, the saint's motherhood is mentioned in all of these instances. This seems to have the aim of emphasising the saint's protective maternal function either through a direct mention or by means of a parallel. Natalie Anne Franz suggests that Hersart may have replaced some ordinary characters by saints such as Saint Anne or the Virgin Mary in order to make the songs appear more epic.¹⁴⁹ However, this seems to only apply to *Lez-Breiz*¹⁵⁰ and possibly *Seiz Gwengamp*¹⁵¹.

In *Itroun Varia Folgoat*¹⁵², an innocent girl is saved from execution by a direct intervention from "*Ar Werc'hez, mamm ar gristenien*" 'the Virgin, mother of Christians'. Since this is technically a miracle, it is unlikely that it could have been another character, because

¹⁴⁸ McMillan suggests that religious practice before the French Revolution was more common among women (McMillan, 2000, p. 26).

¹⁴⁹ Franz, 2011, p. 130

¹⁵⁰ *BB*, pp. 80–105.

¹⁵¹ 'The Siege of Gwengamp', *BB*, pp. 258–260.

¹⁵² 'Our Lady of Folgoat', *BB*, pp. 273–8.

it would require a significant change to the plot as well as the title of the ballad. It should be noted that the title poses the least difficulty, as there are other clear instances where Hersart modified a title to better suit his reconstructed version.¹⁵³

In *Ar Bugel Laec'hiet*¹⁵⁴, a mother prays to the Virgin Mary to help her get her son back after he had been replaced by a changeling. She mentions Mary's son, making a connection with her lost Loik. the Virgin Mary calls her "*ma merc'h*" 'my daughter', further emphasising her role as the mother of Christians. She gives her instructions about how to rectify the situation, but her involvement in this matter ends here.

In *Señiz Gwengamp*, the Virgin Mary "*bag he mab*" 'and her son' save the town by ringing the bells after Duchess Anne prays as a last resort during a siege. In theory, this story would work with a mortal woman ringing the bells instead of the Virgin Mary – perhaps Duchess Anne herself. Franz suggests the substitution of saints for female characters in connection with "defeminization" of heroic songs.¹⁵⁵ However, in this instance, Duchess Anne acts as an army general organizing the defences against the enemy. This ballad further features a female gunner, which suggests that Franz's suggestion does not apply to this song or at least not in full.

The last song from the *gwerzioù* section where a saint plays an active part in the plot is *Lez-Breiz*. Lez-Breiz prays to Saint Anne asking her for protection. He then later contributes his victories to her. He refers to her as his "*mamm ger*" 'dear mother', suggesting that she takes on the role of his deceased mother. At the end of the story, he is finally reunited with Saint Anne in a scene perfectly suited for a mother and son. She calls him "*va mab kez... va mab paour... Me eo da vamm, santez Anna*" 'my dear son... my poor son... I am your mother – Saint Anne'. It is likely that Franz's suggestion applies here. This song is relatively void of women. The knight's sister makes a few appearances, but there is no further mention of her at the end of the ballad. In a similar way, when he comes back

¹⁵³ See Chapter 2.3.

¹⁵⁴ 'The Replaced Child', *BB*, pp. 31–3.

¹⁵⁵ Franz, 2011, pp. 130–131.

home near the beginning of the song, he is let inside by an old woman. She is a new character who appears only in one scene as the sister's foster mother in order to explain the true mother's absence. The knight's mother supposedly died, but it is possible that her function was instead adopted by Saint Anne to give the story a more heroic tone and further strengthen the nationalistic agenda, as Saint Anne is the patroness saint of Brittany.

Beauty

There is an interesting pattern in the description of beauty in the songs belonging to the *gwerziou* section. While many young women are described as *koant* 'pretty' either in direct speech or when the character is first introduced, a more detailed description including hair colour is almost exclusively reserved for the bad women. Descriptions of clothes do not apply here. One of the first things that we learn about the fairy in *Aotrou Nann hag Ar Gorrigan*¹⁵⁶ is that she is “[o] *kriba he bleo hir melen*” ‘combing her long blond hair’. An almost identical description is given of Dahut in *Livaden Geris*¹⁵⁷ after she turns into a mermaid when the city is submerged. She is “[o] *kriba he bleo melen-aur*” ‘combing her gold blond hair’.

In *Seizzen Eured*¹⁵⁸, the fickle fiancée is described thus: “*Diylasket he bleo peur-zu war he diou-skoa gwenn-kann*” ‘Her dark black hair [was] spread on her pale white shoulders.’ The only other descriptions of hair in the *gwerziou* section seem to serve to finish a rhyme, and they describe characters who are already well-established. In the ballad of *Bran*¹⁵⁹, his mother's hair is described as “*gwenn*” ‘white’ to rhyme with “*ken*” soon before she dies, and Azenorik's hair in *Azenorik-C'hla*¹⁶⁰ when she is waiting in her new quarters is given as “*melen*” ‘blond’ in a rhyme with “*krenn*”.

¹⁵⁶ ‘Lord Nann and the Fairy’, *BB*, pp. 25–8.

¹⁵⁷ ‘The Submersion of the City of Is’, *BB*, pp. 39–42.

¹⁵⁸ ‘The Wedding Belt’, *BB*, pp. 234–240.

¹⁵⁹ *BB*, pp. 123–8.

¹⁶⁰ ‘Pale Azenor’, *BB*, pp. 242–8.

It is interesting why a description of hair for a new character is associated with a negative portrayal. According to Duby, physical beauty in France in the 16th century and onwards was considered a virtue along with the different characteristics associated with beauty such as blond hair.¹⁶¹ It may be reminiscent of the symbolism of unbound hair in traditional societies suggesting sexual availability or unfaithfulness. I would further suggest that the reason here is to convey a message of vanity and seductiveness, and it serves to underline the fact that there might be nothing positive to say about the character.

Violence

The most violent songs in the *Barẖaẖ Breiẖ* tend to feature no women whatsoever or only mentions of either female saints (often simply as an exclamation or a prayer) or generic collectives such as ‘mothers’ or ‘widows’ with no purpose in the plot other than to set the atmosphere. Franz suggests that this may be due to Hersart’s editing in an attempt to create a more epic story.¹⁶²

However, a few examples of violence perpetrated by women exist in the *Barẖaẖ Breiẖ*. This violence is not always described as something wrong. We already discussed the gunner’s wife under the command of Duchess Anne in *Seẖiẖ Gwengamp*.¹⁶³ In the case of these two women, direct and indirect violence is implied respectively, but there is no actual description of it. In a much more vivid example, *Jannedik-Flamm*¹⁶⁴ burns the enemy alive. She then describes the aftermath of her horrific action to agricultural practices, noting that “*eskern gall*” ‘French bones’ are a good fertilizer. However, there is no suggestion in the song that murdering 3000-odd enemy soldiers is in any way wrong or cruel. The farmer woman in *Ar Falk’bon*¹⁶⁵ kills the count as a revenge for her dead chicken. This leads to a

¹⁶¹ Duby, 2002, Vol. 3, pp. 75–76.

¹⁶² Franz, 2011, p. 130.

¹⁶³ ‘The Siege of Gwengamp’, *BB*, pp. 258–260.

¹⁶⁴ ‘Jannedik the Flame’, *BB*, pp. 190–194.

¹⁶⁵ ‘The Hawk’, *BB*, pp. 130–133.

revolt. However, she is only mentioned in one word, and any characterization or moral judgement of her violence is missing.¹⁶⁶

Whereas these women used violence in battle or to fight oppression, there are examples of truly bad violent women. Among her other transgressions, the witch in *Loizga hag Abalard*¹⁶⁷ killed a new-born baby in order to feed its blood to a dragon. Her portrayal as well as the moral judgement contained in the song will be studied in detail in Chapter 2.1. Another violent woman takes on the role of antagonist to Saint Ronan in *Bubez Sant Ronan*¹⁶⁸. She locks her own daughter in a chest in order to implicate Saint Ronan, which leads to the child's death until Saint Ronan brings her back to life. Later in the song, she hits an ox's horn so hard that it breaks off. She is described as “*gwall-bez*” ‘completely bad’ and portrayed as a woman filled with hate and rage “*enn abeg d’he hini*” ‘because of herself’. The only reason cited is the fact that other people like Ronan, which can therefore be interpreted as jealousy. She ends up swallowed up by the earth.

The last instance of violence committed by a woman is the most realistic one; however, it does not get a direct description. It is a crime that is only implied. In *Itroun Varia Folgoat*¹⁶⁹, a dead baby is found, and there is a search for the culprit. Fanchonik is found guilty purely on the grounds of circumstantial evidence. After she is saved from execution by the Virgin Mary, it is revealed that the real culprit was a servant woman because she is the only one to fail a test by ordeal. This is the only example in the *Barzaz Breiz* of a mother committing infanticide. There is no portrayal of the real killer whatsoever. Natalie Anne Franz writes that instances of infanticide committed by women in service (presumably who were pregnant with their employers) are “curiously absent from the majority of these [*gwerzïon*]”,¹⁷⁰ raising questions about her reference of comparison as

¹⁶⁶ Archives indicate that violence committed by women other than infanticide was very rare (Franz, 2011, p. 167).

¹⁶⁷ ‘Héloïse and Abélard’, *BB*, pp. 135–8.

¹⁶⁸ ‘The Life of Saint Ronan’, *BB*, pp. 477–480.

¹⁶⁹ ‘Our Lady of Folgoat’, *BB*, pp. 273–8.

¹⁷⁰ Franz, 2011, pp. 152–3.

Mary-Ann Constantine states in her extensive chapter on infanticide in Breton tradition that “Infanticide is not unusual in the gwerz tradition”,¹⁷¹ giving several examples featuring different characters as the baby’s father ranging from the young woman’s own father to clerics and nobles (i.e. possible employers). It is not clear who the baby’s father is in this single instance of infanticide in the *Barzañ Breiz*. It is possible that it is the real killer’s employer since she is referred to as a *vatez* ‘servant woman’ signifying that she is indeed in service, although the plot is too vague for us to draw any definitive conclusions here.

¹⁷¹ *Breton Ballads*, p. 162.

2. Part 2

Introduction

In contrast to Nelly Blanchard's quantitative linguistic analysis outlined in the introduction to this thesis,¹⁷² I propose a different approach for this section. It would be impossible to draw any accurate conclusions about Hersart's editing from mere statistics about the prevalence or proximity of certain words. Such information is taken out of context, which may lead to erroneous or inaccurate assumptions. Instead, I will be looking at specific examples in an attempt to identify Hersart's methods of editing and the aim of these changes to the collected ballads.

As suggested earlier, the preface to the *Barzaz Breiz* provides an insight into Hersart's motivations and the methods he deployed in his work as a collector. He believed that popular songs are “*riches et ornés dans le principe, et que le temps seul les dépoille*”¹⁷³ ‘rich and ornate in principle, and that time alone denudes them’. He also says that “*aucun soin n’a été épargné*” ‘no care was spared’ in making the collection started by his mother “*plus complet et digne d’un intérêt vraiment littéraire et philosophique*”¹⁷⁴ ‘more complete and worthy of real literary and philosophical interest’. This clearly shows that he saw his work as restoring the songs into what they supposedly were at day zero, or the time they were composed when they were at their most complete. He further discusses his reasons for believing that the poets who composed these songs must have been contemporary with the events they were describing.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷² Blanchard, 2006. p. 13.

¹⁷³ *BB*, p. v.

¹⁷⁴ *BB*, p. iv.

¹⁷⁵ He bases this claim on the assumption that in order to be successful, bards needed to please their audience, which could only be achieved by singing about current affairs and issues to which the audience could relate (*BB*, p. xxxvi).

Perhaps even more revelatory is his statement that in order to “*avoir des textes aussi complets et aussi corrects que possible*” ‘have texts as complete and as correct as possible’, he would have them ‘often repeated by different people and in different places’.¹⁷⁶ He then further explains that he would base his work on the version that was most complete. The sentence “*Les versions d’un même chant s’éclairant l’une par l’autre*” ‘[Different] versions of the same song clarifying each other’¹⁷⁷ suggests that he would combine different versions in order to achieve this hypothetical ‘completeness’.

The most relevant point for the following chapters is Hersart’s admission of using ‘the method of Walter Scott’¹⁷⁸. He describes it as “*substituer à certaines expressions viciieuses, à certaines strophes moins poétiques, les stances, les vers ou les mots correspondants des autres leçons*”¹⁷⁹ ‘substitute corresponding stanzas, verses or words from other versions for certain unsound expressions and less poetic stanzas’. This suggests that Hersart saw his method as justified; however, deciding which expressions were ‘unsound’ and which stanzas were ‘less poetic’ was clearly a matter of personal opinion, which is why these instances of editing are so crucial for uncovering Hersart’s thought processes and the effect this had on the portrayal of women.

Hersart’s field notebooks, in part published and studied in Donatien Laurent’s *Aux Sources du Barzaz-Breiz*,¹⁸⁰ provide a valuable starting point for separating the ‘collected’ from the ‘edited’. Other points of reference used in the following chapters are versions of the same songs collected and published by other collectors of Hersart’s time. It is clear that their songs have also been edited to a varying degree. A detailed study of the editing practices of the other collectors mentioned in the following chapters would be beyond the scope of this thesis; however, looking at the finished song texts and comparing the

¹⁷⁶ BB, p. v.

¹⁷⁷ BB, p. vi.

¹⁷⁸ BB, p. vi.

¹⁷⁹ BB, p. vi.

¹⁸⁰ Donatien Laurent, *Aux Sources du Barzaz-Breiz: La mémoire d’un peuple*, 1989.

differences in the different collectors' versions should prove of use in studying the traditional material from which these songs are derived, as these other versions provide a point of reference and may reveal interesting patterns. Tracking down different versions of ballads used to be a difficult job, but it has recently been simplified by modern technologies. Dastum, a Breton association with the aim of collecting and protecting Breton cultural heritage, provides a database of material in various formats accessible via their website.¹⁸¹

In the following chapters, I will be looking at three ballads from the *Barzañ Breiz* that have also been extensively collected by other collectors. They are *Loizga hag Abalard*¹⁸², *Ar Plac'h Dimezet Gand Satan*¹⁸³ and *Ar Breur Mager*¹⁸⁴. These songs along with the other versions cited in this paper are included in the appendix for convenience. I will discuss the differences between the versions provided by different collectors in terms of plot, narrative techniques and language, and I will study the editing methods employed by Hersart, focusing on how these changes affect the portrayal of women, and where conclusions can be drawn, I will also attempt to identify possible motivations for these instances of editing.

¹⁸¹ See <http://www.dastumedia.bzh>.

¹⁸² 'Héloise and Abélard', *BB*, pp. 135–8.

¹⁸³ 'The Woman Married to Satan', *BB*, pp. 157–161.

¹⁸⁴ 'The Foster Brother', *BB*, pp. 163–170.

2.1. Loiza hag Abalard

This song has been widely collected. The different versions all tell a very similar story and share many expressions and in most cases even numerous whole stanzas. However, there are several aspects of Hersart's ballad that distinguish it from the other songs. Foremost, unlike the below-mentioned songs collected by Luzel, Penguern and Le Goff, this ballad mentions the historical characters of Héloïse and Abelard. Pierre Abelard, a 12th-century Breton philosopher, and Héloïse d'Argenteuil, a French scholar and abbess, are renowned not only for their knowledge and scholarly achievements, but also for their romantic relationship. The reference to these historical figures in Hersart's song will be discussed below in more detail.

The plot in Hersart's song is told in first person singular from the point of view of Loiza. She is twelve when she leaves her father's house to go to Nantes with Abalard. The language used to describe Abalard is very affectionate. She refers to him as “*ma c'hloarek, ma Abalardik mad... ma dousik kloarek*” ‘my clerk, my good little Abalard... my sweet clerk’, and near the end of the ballad, she also says “*ma dous ha me hon daou*” ‘my darling and I together’. Affectionate language of this kind seems to be unique to Hersart's version, as none of the other songs discussed here contain any such references. Furthermore, *Loiza hag Abalard* is the only ballad studied here that mentions a romantic relationship (i.e. actual affection as opposed to a mere acquaintance) between the female protagonist and a man.

The woman then contrasts the knowledge she possessed before she came to Nantes with everything she subsequently learnt. At first, she could only speak Breton, and her knowledge of religion was limited to saying the Lord's Prayer. She then became very well educated – with knowledge of French and Latin, reading and writing, and even knowing how to consecrate the Host “*kerkouls ha peb belek*” ‘as well as any priest’. This suggests deep knowledge of religious practices. It could also be interpreted as a reference to heresy, because only an ordained priest is allowed to perform such action.

The following stanza very directly portrays Loiza's powers as being against religion:

*Ha miret ouz ar belek da lar be oferen,
Ha skloumo ann alc'houlten e kreiz hag enn daoubenn.*

‘And [I know how] to prevent a priest from saying mass and to [prevent a marriage from producing children by means of an evil spell]¹⁸⁵.’ Although the other versions discussed in this chapter also provide evidence of the woman's heresy to a varying degree, this expression or image is not present in any of them. It can, however, be found in a song from Hersart's notebooks titled *An Aour Iaten*¹⁸⁶, which was undoubtedly used as the basis for the ballad of *Loiza hag Abalard*. The presence of this image in Hersart's song text therefore does not seem to be of his own addition.

We subsequently learn about Loiza's other powers. The following four stanzas provide a description of one power in each one. They are alchemy, shape-shifting, elemental and/or bardic magic and clairvoyance. None of the other songs mention any of these powers. These stanzas could therefore be the result of Hersart's own work, although it is possible that they come from yet another version not known to the other collectors. It is interesting to note that the first of these four stanzas mentions that Loiza is able to find “*ann aour touez al ludu*” ‘gold among cinders’. The last stanza of *Merc'h Ar Baron*¹⁸⁷ collected by Le Goff also juxtaposes gold and cinders, but the image is very different:

*Me 'm bije laket ker tano, ker'h, segal had id-du,
Evel an aour melen e forniet d'al ludu.*

‘I would have put oats, rye and buckwheat so scarce, like yellow gold, in a furnace to turn to cinders.’ The imagery of this stanza is a little confused;¹⁸⁸ however, the comparison with

¹⁸⁵ “*Skoulmañ an akuilbetenn*” ‘to tie a lace’ is an idiomatic expression. The definition given in *Geriadur Brezhoneg An Here* is as follows: “*ober un dro sorerezh a-benn mirout ouz priedoñ a gaout bugale*” ‘to cast a spell in order to prevent a married couple from having children’ (p. 30).

¹⁸⁶ ‘The Golden Herb’, published in *Aux Sources*, p. 147.

¹⁸⁷ ‘The Baron's Daughter’, collected by Le Goff, (Pérennès, 1938) pp. 218–223.

¹⁸⁸ Pérennès's translation is also confused. He begins the stanza with “*J'aurais vendu*” ‘I would have sold’. The origin of the verb ‘to sell’ in his translation is unclear, but it is possible that the unnatural word order made it seem like the only logical possibility. I, however, am of the opinion that “*laket*” ‘put’ is linked with “*e forniet d'al ludu*” ‘in a furnace to [turn into] cinders’ and “*ker tano*” ‘so scarce’ describes the listed crops, and would

gold probably refers to the colour of ripe crops and possibly their value and scarcity (due to the various mentions of witches ruining crops in these songs) and the great damage burning them would do. This may be an argument for the existence of yet another version containing a similar image that is closer to the one in Hersart's song and providing more detail about the woman's alchemical skills, but the link is too weak for any certain conclusions, and this trait therefore seems to be unique to *Loiz̃a hag Abalard*.

The following three stanzas describe the first time she made *louzon*, which is probably best translated as 'a magic potion', with '[her] sweet clerk'. This, combined with the fact that she became educated as a result of leaving home with him, could be interpreted as evidence that Abalard is her teacher; however, the verse on its own offers only a weak connection. These two instances are the only parts of this ballad that imply she had help from anyone. Throughout the song, she is portrayed as an extremely powerful and strong character.

The concocted potion is then tested:

*Kenta 'toliz̃ ma louzon da c'hout hag ben oa mad,
A oe e-kreiz park segal ann otron ann Abad*

'First time I cast my potion to know that it was good was in the middle of the abbot's field of rye'. The same stanza with slight variations is present in all but one of the other collectors' versions discussed here. However, instead of rhyming *mad* with "*ann Abad*" 'the abbot', they all rhyme it with "*ma z̃ad*" 'my father'. Although this stanza is not present in the partially fragmented *An Aour Iaten*, it does contain a stanza that is a direct counterpart of the following stanza of *Loiz̃a hag Abalard* which shows the exact same substitution:

*Deuz trionec'h bigouad segal doa hadet ann Abad,
N'en deuz bet da z̃astumi nemed diou guichennad.*

'Of the eighteen loads of rye that the abbot sowed, only two tufts were to be gathered.'

This strongly suggests that the substitution is due to Hersart's editing. In the other

therefore in natural speech be placed after the list, linking it with "*evel an aour melen*" 'like yellow gold'. The word order seems to be altered in order to suit the rhyme scheme.

versions, the protagonist's actions that show disloyalty to her parents add to her negative portrayal. This aspect is absent from *Loiza hag Abalard*.

The following episode is central to the ballad, as it is present in all the versions discussed here. Loiza says that she has a coffer at the family home, in which there are three vipers incubating a dragon egg, which, if it hatches, will cause great suffering. She feeds them “*goad saker ar re z'nam*” ‘the sacred blood of the innocent’. She then gives an account of her first kill. She talks of a baby on the way to its baptism. No details of the actual kill are given, but we are told that she then tiptoed shoeless to unbury it. This terrifying image is not entirely unique to the *Barza Breiz*. A baby on its way to its baptism is present in Luzel's second version of his *Janedik Ar Zorseres*¹⁸⁹, in Penguern's *Son Janedic*¹⁹⁰, and Pérennès mentions a similar image in a song collected by Lossouarn¹⁹¹, but these do not mention extracting the corpse afterwards. Up until this point in *Loiza hag Abalard*, the focus is mainly on Loiza's knowledge and powers. There are other mentions of her evil deeds, but only this image makes Loiza look truly terrifying.

The following two stanzas contain a subtle yet important difference between *Loiza hag Abalard* and the other versions of this ballad:

*Mar jommann war ann douar, ha gen-in ma Goulaou,
Mar jommomp war ar bed-man, c'hoaz eur bloavez pe z'aoz ;*

*C'hoaz eunn daou pe dri bloavez, ma dous ha me hon daou,
Ni a lakai ar bed-man da drei war he c'hinaou.*

‘If I stay on this earth, and my Light with me, if we stay in this world one more year or two;
Two more years or three, my darling and I together, we will turn this world upside down.’
The expression ‘my Light’ undoubtedly refers to Abalard. These two stanzas are essentially an if-clause. The condition uses the present tense ‘if we stay in this world...’, and the result uses the future tense ‘we will turn the world upside down’. This implies a certain degree of

¹⁸⁹ ‘Janedik the witch’, *GBI1*, pp. 54–7.

¹⁹⁰ ‘The song of Janedic’, Penguern, 1997, pp. 148–9.

¹⁹¹ *AB*, p. 220.

probability that this will indeed happen. A similar if-clause can be found in several of the other songs, namely in both Luzel's versions, in Le Goff's version and in *An Aour Iaten*, but they all use the second conditional, sometimes referred to as the “j” conditional or the “unreal” conditional in Breton. That condition therefore cannot be fulfilled. This difference is very interesting because, as will be mentioned in more detail below, *Loizga hag Abalard* is the only one of the songs discussed in this chapter that does not either feature a trial or somehow imply that she is condemned to death. In the other songs, the if-clause in itself implies that the witch is to die, because staying alive is presented as an unreal condition.

The last stanza of *Loizga hag Abalard* does not have any equivalent in any of the other song texts:

*Evesait mad, Loizgaik, evesait d'hoc'h ene,
Mar d-eo ar bed-man d'hoc'h-bu, da Zoue egile.*

‘Watch out, Loiza, watch out for your soul, if this world is yours, the other one is god’s.’ This couplet suggests that Loiza will not be going to heaven. ‘If this world is yours’ partially serves to admit Loiza’s great power, but its primary function is to serve as an answer to the two penultimate stanzas quoted above. In the absence of a trial or a death sentence, this stanza passes moral judgment on Loiza and thus provides a logical conclusion to the plot. Its uniqueness among the songs studied here suggests it might be Hersart’s own addition – an alternative to a death sentence to conclude the story.

Luzel’s first version of *Janedik Ar Zorseres*¹⁹² is possibly the most distinctive version of this ballad that will be discussed here. A very similar but noticeably shorter version was collected by Penguern and is entitled *Son Janedic*. It shares all the important features of Luzel’s song and therefore will not be discussed separately except where significant differences are present. *Janedik Ar Zorseres* is partly told in third person and partly through dialogue – the only other version discussed here employing this style and not primarily

¹⁹² *GBII*, pp. 50–53.

using the first person is Penguern's *Sorceress*¹⁹³. *Janedik Ar Zorseres* starts with Janedik and her father going to a pardon. As they approach Guéodet, Janedik points out a field of rye and says that when they return, there will be no rye left. Her father asks her to give him a demonstration on a small part of the field (“*ledander ul linsel-wenterez*” ‘size of a winnow cloth’) so that he should know whether she is a sorceress. She refuses, saying that she would ruin the whole country.

At home, her father Iann tells his wife that they have raised “*ur verc’h a oar gwalla ann ed*” ‘a daughter who knows how to ruin crops’. The expression “*gwalla ann ed*” ‘to ruin crops’ in its different forms is central to most versions of this ballad. In many cases, it is presented as the woman’s main crime and the reason why she is on trial. Although ruining crops is present in *Loizga hag Abalard*, the expression itself is missing, and the deed is not given much importance in Hersart’s ballad. The expression was without doubt known to Hersart because a related expression can be found in *An Aour Iaten* – “*laket keir ann ed*” ‘to make crops expensive’. The only other song studied here that does not contain this expression is Le Goff’s *Merc’h ar Baron*. It does, however, contain several other mentions of ruining crops including its last stanza quoted earlier in this chapter. Hersart’s song therefore remains the only version that does not revolve around ruining crops.

Janedik’s parents report her to the authorities. She is then “*barnet*” ‘judged’. She is asked several questions to which she provides answers. An interesting thing to note is that her answers closely resemble Hersart’s ballad, and the questions of the tribunal, which are completely missing from *Loizga hag Abalard*, provide a logical link and hold the story together. First, she is asked how she learnt to ruin crops. She gives account of a shepherd at the family home who took her to a sabbath each night. These two stanzas provide a summary of the major differences between the other songs and Hersart’s version of the ballad:

¹⁹³ ‘Sorceress’, *PW*, pp. 125–6.

— *Gant ur mesaër denved a oa en ti ma zad,
Ma c’hasse bepnoz gant-han da welet ar zabad,*

*Lec’h ma vije ’r zorserienn hag ar zorserezed;
Hag a diskas d’in ’r sekret enit gwalla ann ed.*

‘With a shepherd that was at my father’s house, who would take me with him each night to see the sabbath, where there would be sorcerers and sorceresses; And he taught me the secret for ruining crops.’ In this instance, the man is clearly identified as Janedik’s teacher. A mention of sabbaths and other witches (both male and female) is also present in most of the other songs, but is missing from *Loiz̃a hag Abalard*. There is no mention of any romantic relationship between Janedik and the shepherd.

Janedik then goes on to say that before he came to the house, she did not have any knowledge beyond praying with her rosary. Now, she knows Latin, how to write and read and how to stop a priest from saying mass and consecrating the Host. Unlike in *Loiz̃a hag Abalard*, Janedik does not possess any skills of a priest’s repertoire, and her knowledge is all linked to heresy and witchcraft.

She is then asked what is needed in order to ruin crops. She gives a list similar to a list given in *Loiz̃a hag Abalard*:

— *Red’ kaout kalon un tousek, lagad-kleiz ur mal-bran,
Ann had dimeuz ar radenn, en noz tantad Sant-Iann.*

‘One needs a toad’s heart, the left eye of a male raven, the seed of the fern collected on the Eve of the Feast of Saint John.’ A more-or-less identical list can be found in all the other versions discussed here except in Penguern’s *Ar sorcerez*¹⁹⁴. The list given in *Loiz̃a hag Abalard* is a lot more detailed:

*Kentan louzou am euz gret gant ma dousik kloarek,
Oe gand lagad klei eur vran ha kalon eunn tousek ;*

*Ha gand had ar raden glaz, don ar puns kant goured,
Ha grouion ann aour-ieoten war ar prad dastumet ;*

¹⁹⁴ ‘The Sorceress’, *PW*, pp. 93–4.

*Dastumet, diskabel-kaer, d'ar goulou-de a-grenn,
Nemed ma iviḡ gen-in, hag ouspenn dierc'henn.*

‘The first magic potion I made with my sweet clerk was with the left eye of a raven and the heart of a toad; And with the seed of green fern a hundred fathoms deep in the well, and the roots of the golden herb collected in the field; Collected, bareheaded, in the light of day, only in my shirt/nightdress and also barefooted’. This list is perhaps more reminiscent of the druidic tradition rather than witchcraft. Either way, these stanzas are heavily influenced by *An Aour Iaten* from Hersart’s notebooks.

Returning to Luzel’s song, Janedik follows the list with a mysterious mention of another plant that she shall not name, without which the other ingredients have no power – this could be an allusion to the golden herb. She then goes on to talk about the coffer at her father’s house, in which three vipers are incubating “*ur serpanl*” ‘a serpent/dragon’. This episode is very similar to the one present in *Loiḡa hag Abalard*. Janedik feeds them “*ar goad roial enḡ ann inosanted, Pa ‘ḡ aint wit beḡa badel*” ‘the royal blood of the innocents when they go to be baptised’. No further detail is given relating to how it is obtained.

She then says that she would also give them “*goad ma mamm ha ma ḡad*” ‘the blood of my mother and my father’ if the well-being of her menagerie required it. Here, *Son Janedic* differs slightly, instead giving “*kalon ma mam ha ma ḡad*” ‘the heart of my mother and my father’. An almost identical expression is also present in Le Goff’s *Merc’h ar Baron*. Feeding parts of one’s own parents to monsters shows a very high degree of disloyalty. As mentioned above, this aspect is completely absent from *Loiḡa hag Abalard*, even though it appears in all the other songs discussed in this chapter. Even *An Aour Iaten* from Hersart’s notebooks gives “*mem bije lakel ar mab evit laḡo he dad ... mem bije [part missing] evit laḡo he mam*” ‘I would have made a son kill his father ... I would have [?] made a daughter] kill her mother’. The theme of disloyalty to one’s parents in this ballad was therefore well-known to Hersart, which supports my point that its absence from *Loiḡa hag Abalard* is a result of his editing.

In the final part of Luzel's *Janedik Ar Zorseres* version 1, Janedik is asked how the monsters can be stopped. She provides instructions involving burning them in a field. The second version of *Janedik Ar Zorseres* contains verses that are almost identical, and there is a very similar stanza in Penguern's *Ar sorverez*. She finishes by saying:

*Na mar vijenn-me bet c'hoas ur bloavezh en buhe,
Am bije laket ar bed da vont war he goste ! —*

'Had I stayed alive one more year, I would have turned the world upside down!' The use of the second, or "unreal", conditional in Breton clearly indicates that Janedik is to be executed.

The second version of Luzel's *Janedik Ar Zorseres* shares many features of both of the ballads discussed above. Similarly to *Loiza hag Abalard*, it is told in first person singular. Janedik says that when she went to Paris to learn French, all she knew was how to pray with her rosary. Her subsequently acquired knowledge is described thus:

*Met brema me 'm euz disket, me oar skiva ha lenn,
Ha kerkouls hag ar belek laret ann oferenn;

Me oar kana 'nn abostol, bars ann oferenn-bred,
Ha konsakri ann hosti, mar ve d'in permetet.*

'But now I've gained knowledge, I can write and read and say mass as well as a priest. I can sing epistles at the High Mass and consecrate the Host if I'm allowed.' This passage is similar to the one in *Loiza hag Abalard*, but this one provides more detail of knowledge of religious rituals and no mention of their sabotage at this point. However, anti-religious acts are mentioned further in this ballad:

*War-bed seiz lew diouzoq'h n'euz dioanet tamm ed,
Ha bugel-bihan ganet, hini n'euz badezet?*

'No crops have sprouted within seven leagues from you and no baby born was baptised.'

Janedik is asked who taught her how to ruin crops in a similar fashion to Luzel's first version. Her answer is similar, except that the man is described as "ur c'hloarek

iaouank” ‘a young clerk’. Witches of both genders are also mentioned. Her answer as to what is needed in order to ruin crops is also very similar to the first version.

It then follows:

*Kenta lakiz ma louzon, da c’houd ha bi oa mad,
Oa ’n ur mezoad segall hen doa badet ma zad;*

‘The first time I placed my magic potion to know that it was good was in a field full of rye sown by my father.’ The use of ‘*ma zad*’ where ‘*ann Abad*’ is substituted in *Loiza hag Abalard* should be noted.

This is followed by the familiar episode about dragon breeding. The description of the monsters’ diet is as follows:

*Ma vo gant ar goad roial euz ann inosanted,
Kent wit monet d’ann iliz da veza badezet.*

*Me ouie laza ’r bugel en kornik ar porchet,
Prest da resev badeziant, hag ar belek gwisket.*

‘It is with the royal blood of the innocent before going to the church to be baptised. I would kill the child at the corner of the porch [when it was] ready to receive baptism, and the priest already dressed up.’ It is not dissimilar to the two ballads discussed above. The final four stanzas are practically identical to the ending of Luzel’s first version including the second conditional suggesting that Janedik is going to die.

Penguern’s *Ar sorcerez* is a little briefer but very similar to *Janedik Ar Zorseres* version 2. It starts without any comparison of prior lack of knowledge and subsequent learning. We simply learn that the protagonist was “*desket mad*” ‘well educated’ before she turned fifteen. Afterwards up until the penultimate stanza, this ballad shares all the important features of Luzel’s second version. The woman has knowledge of religious rituals, “*eur skollolaer yaouank*” ‘a young scholar’ took her to sabbaths where she learnt from “*ar sorcerien ag ar sorcerezet*” ‘sorcerers and sorceresses’ how to “*Goali an ed*” ‘ruin crops’. She tested her first “*louzon*” ‘magic potion’ on her father’s rye, she breeds dragons in a coffer and feeds them “*goad ar vugale munut, kig an innoçantel*” ‘the blood of tiny children, the flesh of the innocent’, and the

coffer can be destroyed by burning it in a triangular field – a new detail. The last stanza stands out somewhat:

*Me ia breman dar maro pa em boa miritet
Balamour dam sorcerejou pere am moa desket.*

‘I am now going to my death that I deserve for the sorcery that I have learnt.’ Although different from Luzel’s songs, the purpose of the last stanza remains the same – it confirms that the witch is sentenced to death. In this song, it also seems like her admission of guilt and perhaps a sign of repentance.

Another version collected by Penguern and entitled *Sorceres* follows the same plot but omits a few details and adds a few new ones. The ballad starts with a narrator introducing the song in a way employed by many Breton ballads:

*Sellaonit hag e kleffot, hag he kleffot kana
eur wers a zo kompozet a neve vid ar bla.*

*zo gred da Katellik ar Gall peni deus gred
sorcerer evid laza an ed.*

‘Listen and you will hear a ballad newly composed this year. It’s been made about Katellik ar Gall who has used sorcery to kill crops.’ This clearly suggests that ruining crops is a central theme in this ballad.

The rest of the song is in a form of a dialogue between someone – possibly the narrator or a judge – and Katellik. Similarly to the other songs with the exception of *Loizga hag Abalard*, Katellik is asked questions about her crimes, and she provides answers to each of these questions. We learn that she tested her first “*louzon*” ‘magic potion’ on her father’s rye, she learnt the secret for killing crops from “*eur c’bloarek iaouank*” ‘a young clerk’ who took her to a sabbath each night. There is no mention of other sorcerers or sorceresses. She then gives a list of ingredients needed for this potion very similar to Luzel’s songs, the second version in particular. This recounting of ingredients was missing in *Ar sorcerer*. A new detail is introduced following the list:

Bed dindan an oter c'houel epad an offern bred

[Of the ingredients:] ‘Underneath the altar of the Feast [of Saint John] during the High Mass’ – collecting ingredients for an evil potion in such close proximity to religious symbols can definitely be considered a sign of heresy. Afterwards, just like in the other songs, we learn that she breeds dragons in a coffer and feeds them “*ar bugale vunut a ben ma veint badeel*” ‘tiny children when they are being baptised’.

The following three stanzas introduce a new element and complete the story:

— *Ar ça ta Katellik ar Gall, c'houi o c'beus meritet*
Ar maro sertenamant pa distrujit an ed.

eun ivis rousinet a voa dei gonisket
eun torch koar ellumet
evid e lakad dar maro pa e dewa meritet.

Ma rache reflexion var nezi an oll plac'het
Da ziwel sertenamant doc'h visson fal ar bed.

‘— Well, Katellik ar Gall, you certainly deserve to die since you destroy crops. She was clad in a shirt soaked in resin; a torch of wax was lit to put her to death that she deserved. Think of her, girls, to beware of the vices of the world.’ Of the songs studied here, this is the only one that directly describes the witch’s death. The moral in the last stanza is also interesting because it is gender-specific – only addressed to girls. This ballad also does not mention other sorcerers and sorceresses (both genders) unlike Luzel’s songs and *Ar sorcerez*. We could argue that the gender-specific warning is a little unfair given that it was a man who taught Katellik sorcery in the first place.

Merc’h ar Baron collected by Le Goff offers yet another version of the story. The beginning is different from the other songs and perhaps a little confused:

Me a zo merc’h d’eur baron devez a Vreiz-Izel
Hag aruok ar Brinsez vras ranket em eus tec’hel;

Ha ranket em eus tec’hel evit monet da Bariž
Evit deski sekerejou misterion an Ofis.

'I am the daughter of a baron from Lower Brittany, and I had to flee in front of a great princess; I had to flee to go to Paris to learn the secrets of the mysteries of the Office.' It is clear that the intention here was to acquire knowledge of religious practices.

The ballad then follows along familiar lines. The protagonist says that when she went to learn French, all she knew was Breton, but now she can read and write and prevent the priest from saying mass and consecrating the Host. She is then asked with whom she learnt such sorcery. Her answer is as follows:

*Digant eur c'hloareg yaouank, er ger e ti ma zad,
P'hini ma c'hase gantan d'an dans ha d'an ebat.*

*P'hini ma c'hase gantan d'an dans, d'an ebatou
Lec'h ma vezze implijet ar sorserezh louzou.*

'With a young clerk at my father's house who would take me with him to dances and parties. Who would take me to dances and parties where magic potions were used.' The word *ebat* 'party' is used instead of *sabad* 'sabbath'. This could be a substitution of a similar sounding word due to oral transmission or it could be a form of sanitizing either on the part of Le Goff or his informant. Of the songs discussed here, this is the only one other than *Loizha hag Abalard* that does not contain the word *sabad*. Furthermore, although *Merc'h ar Baron* does not mention other sorcerers and sorceresses directly, their presence is implied by the use of the passive verb in the last verse quoted above.

I mentioned earlier that *Loizha hag Abalard* is the only song discussed here that mentions a romantic relationship between the female protagonist and a man. From a modern perspective, going to parties and dancing together could be perceived as courting, but in this instance, it does not seem to imply any love or romance, which is further supported by the lack of affectionate language in this song.

The ballad continues in a familiar way. The protagonist says that she tested her first magic potion on her father's rye, she is then asked about the necessary ingredients, and she provides the familiar list. She then continues to talk about breeding dragons and feeding them her parents' respective hearts.

She then goes on to describe a way of destroying the cofferful of monsters, this time without being asked. Her instructions are a little different:

*Me am eus eur bern balan, er ger e penn ma z'i,
Me lakay ma boest vihan en he greiz da z'evi.*

'I have a pile of broom at home at the end of the house, and I will put my little coffer in the middle to burn.' At the end of the ballad, she says that had she been alive one more year or two, she would have turned Lower Brittany upside down, implying that she is going to die, followed by a stanza about burning crops quoted earlier.

The ballads collected by Luzel, Penguern and Le Goff all come from the same pool of motifs. They each have their particularities, but between each other, they have more similarities than differences. *Loiza hag Abalard*, on the other hand, seems to have numerous parts missing, such as a witch trial and a death sentence, sabbaths or any mention of harming one's parents, and other parts added, such as a romantic relationship or various poetic details. Loiza appears less evil than the young women in the other songs, and there is more emphasis on her powers rather than her crimes. Then, there is the question of the characters' names. In Hersart's short introduction to this ballad, he raises a point about this strange metamorphosis of a famous female into a witch in Breton popular culture and continues by saying that "*à cette époque de naïve ignorance, tout savant ... était un sorcier*" 'in this time of naive ignorance, every knowledgeable person ... was a sorcerer'. This goes in line with his romantic vision of Brittany where primitivism is equated with the original and therefore the unspoilt.¹⁹⁵

It is very well possible that the names of the historical figures of Héloïse and Abélard have been grafted into the ballad by Hersart, and that the changes outlined above serve the purpose of making the song fit history more because we know that Héloïse was not a sabbath-going witch, she was not burned at the stake, and she had a relationship with

¹⁹⁵ See Blanchard, 2006, pp. 81–82.

her teacher Abélard. However, it is still a very poor fit, because unlike the young girl in the ballad, Héloïse was French and not Breton.

This brings us to a curious fragment from Hersart's notebooks entitled *Abelard*¹⁹⁶:

*enn amzer a oan em gherik em gherik timezat
ne bouien me ma doué nemet ar brezonek
— Diboa an oad da zek bla meus (kuitet) ti me zat
pe oan me oet da baris —*

'In the time when I was at home, at home in my father's house, my god, I only knew Breton. I left my father's house when I was ten years old when I went to Paris.' This fragment is very similar to the beginning of the ballad studied here, and it is clearly another version of it. Since it is told in first person singular, it is impossible to know who the protagonist is, but based on the title, we could argue that the protagonist and narrator of this short piece could be Abélard. Even though there is still a large dose of poetic licence involved, this would fit history a lot more, because we know that Abélard was a Breton who went to Paris to pursue an academic career.

It is possible that, because of its similarities to the other songs all featuring a woman, Hersart assumed that this fragment was about Héloïse, and he implanted it into *An Aour Iaten* or another version collected by him that does not mention the woman's name. It is possible that he was "improving" the song conscious of the illegitimacy of what he was doing, but based on the existence of the fragment, it is also possible that he was convinced that he was merely restoring an incomplete song.

Francis Gourvil does not refer to the fragment in his criticism of *Loizga hag Abalard*¹⁹⁷ because his thesis was published before Hersart's notebooks came to light. He states that *Loizga hag Abalard* is the only known version of this ballad that includes these names.¹⁹⁸ He mentions a piece entitled *Konfession ann Abadez Loizga* published by Gabriel

¹⁹⁶ *Aux Sources*, p. 244.

¹⁹⁷ Gourvil, 1960, pp. 426–428.

¹⁹⁸ Gourvil, 1960, p. 428.

Milin in *Bulletin de la Société Académique de Brest*¹⁹⁹ but rejects the article, saying that there is “*plus de verbiage que de faits positifs*” ‘more verbiage than positive facts’. Milin suggests that the ballad featuring Héloïse in the role of a witch was composed by monks from the Abbey of Saint-Gildas as a sort of revenge for Abélard’s reforms.²⁰⁰ His sources do not seem to be very reliable, but the text of *Konfession ann Abadez Loiz̃a* that, according to Milin, has been collected by Mauriès in 1857, is interesting. It shares some similarities with *Loiz̃a hag Abalard* and the other songs discussed above, but it is not clearly recognizable as a version of the same song. It is possible that Gourvil is right to reject this song text, as it was collected after the first publication of the *Barzaz Breiz*, the author of the article seems to be set on proving the authenticity of *Loiz̃a hag Abalard*, and many of his claims are not supported by reliable literature. A more detailed study of *Konfession ann Abadez Loiz̃a* and its sources is needed to determine its validity with more certainty. In either case, the changes in the female protagonist’s characterization seem to be Hersart’s attempt at making the ballad more historically convincing.

¹⁹⁹ Milin, 1868, pp. 393–4.

²⁰⁰ Milin, 1868, p. 390.

2.2. Ar Plac'h Dimezet Gand Satan

This ballad has been collected by many collectors of Breton oral literature all around Lower Brittany in places ranging from Kerarbornge²⁰¹ to Tréguier²⁰² and the department of Vannes²⁰³. Just like the geographical origins of the different versions, the motifs present and the portrayal of the female protagonist vary considerably. They all share one motif – a (newly-wed) woman goes to hell. Most of them make some sort of moral statement about hell being the punishment for being engaged multiple times (although one of the versions studied here has no explanation for the woman's fate whatsoever);²⁰⁴ however, not all of them directly mention that this is the case of the woman in question.

In the introduction to the *Barzaz Breiz*, Hersart suggests that throughout the ages, some songs have always been “*adressées aux femmes et aux jeunes filles*”²⁰⁵ ‘addressed to women and young girls’, supposedly as a form of moral lesson. He further contrasts these songs with ballads depicting historical events and important public figures. This song seems to belong among the former kind. There is a clear overarching moral in this ballad, but the various versions deal with it differently, which will be discussed below.

The central word of this ballad is the Breton word *dimeziñ* ‘to get married/engaged’. It requires some explanation. It is generally translated as ‘to get married’, except when contrasted with *eurejiñ* ‘to have a wedding’, i.e. to get married, in which case it is clear that *dimeziñ* refers to the betrothal instead. However, *dimeziñ* also has another meaning. It can also be understood as a reference to sexual intercourse. This is very clear from the expression *c’hoant dimeziñ* ‘desire to marry’, which has little to do with the desire to enter married life and instead means ‘to be horny’.

²⁰¹ Janet Ar Wern version 2, *GBI1*, pp. 34–42.

²⁰² An aer wiber, *PW*, pp. 312–5.

²⁰³ Jannet en Trémarek, collected by Fañch Kadig and published by “La Paroisse Bretonne de Paris”, Paris, 1907.

²⁰⁴ Jannet en Trémarek.

²⁰⁵ *BB*, p. xxx.

In *Ar plac'h dimezet gand Satan*²⁰⁶, the story starts with an image of the viper – presumably in this case a metaphor for sin. There is no more mention of the viper after this point. We learn that there are 18 tailors preparing wedding clothes for the female protagonist. The following stanza foreshadows the ending of the story and possibly provides some characterization:

*Trionec'h kemener d'he gwiska,
Nemet Satan d'he diviska.*

‘Eighteen tailors to dress her, and only Satan to undress her.’ This stanza probably refers to the ease at which virtue is lost. The word *nemet* ‘only’ creates ambiguity. It could also be interpreted as meaning that she has not had sexual intercourse before, although it could also mean that she has never been undressed ‘the right way’, i.e. by her husband, and instead engaged in pre-marital sex. Whichever way it may be, this is the only direct allusion to the woman’s sin that *Ar plac'h dimezet gand Satan* provides. There is one indirect allusion at the end of the song, which will be explained below.

The number eighteen appears often in Breton traditional songs. It is generally not meant literally, but it is instead a token number similar to ‘three’ or ‘seven’. Constantine discusses this use of the number eighteen in Breton tradition in her book.²⁰⁷ I would further suggest that this role of the number eighteen is at least in part due to its etymology in Breton – *trivec'h* literally means ‘three sixes’, whereas the other numbers from 11 to 19 use a decimal form: *unnek* ‘one (and) ten’, *dauzek* ‘two (and) ten’, etc. ‘Eighteen’ does not follow this pattern, and it is therefore the odd one out, so to speak, which would explain why it gets used as a token number in Breton.

Returning to Hersart’s ballad, as the bride enters the church, she changes from beautiful to “*ker vaen hag eunn durzunal*” ‘as indecisive/useless (or possibly weak from “*gwan*” as opposed to “*ven*”) as a dove’. This motif is present in all the other versions discussed

²⁰⁶ ‘The woman married to Satan’.

²⁰⁷ *Breton Ballads*, pp. 91–92.

here that feature a wedding; however, they have her change to *du* ‘black/dark’ instead of indecisive/useless, and this darkness is compared to Lucifer in three of them²⁰⁸ and coal and then sin in the fourth²⁰⁹. It seems that the change in the Barzaz Breiz from *Lusufer* to *durzun* (or *turzhunell* in modern spelling) is not a very big change in terms of phonetics, but it is an important change in characterization, because the woman in Hersart’s song is therefore not compared to the devil but to a bird usually associated with positive things. As the dove is not present in any of the other songs, and a song entitled *Me meus gret daou tri dizem*²¹⁰ from Hersart’s collection notebooks also contains the word *lucifer* instead, I suggest that the change to *durzun* is not caused by oral transmission, but is a direct result of Hersart’s editing. However, his motive for this cannot be determined with certainty – he could have wanted to make the woman appear in a more positive light or he could have thought that this change made the song more logical because the woman in this song text is not portrayed as a bad person, and therefore comparing her to Lucifer would have made little sense.

Next, there is a description of a rich-looking gentleman on horseback – presumably the devil. He addresses a gentleman called Piar Izel-vet (probably the husband, although the song is not very clear) and asks to take the newlywed woman to see his parents²¹¹, promising that he will return her presently. The woman is thus kidnapped by the devil.

The mysterious gentleman asks musicians returning from the wedding whether they would like to see the lost bride. They are then transported to hell, where they get to talk to her. She tells them to take her wedding ribbon from her and to take her wedding ring to

²⁰⁸ “*du evel Lusufer*” in Janet Ar Wern version 1, “*ken du ha Lusufer*” in Janet Ar Wern version 2 and “*du evel enl lusufer*” in An aer wiber.

²⁰⁹ “*du evel glaou ... Du ho kavan vel er pec’het*” – *PW*, pp. 308–311. This ballad does not have a title. I will refer to it as *Penneres ar Wouern*, which is the title used to refer to the protagonist.

²¹⁰ ‘I was engaged two or three times’, *Aux Sources*, p. 158.

²¹¹ In a song text entitled *Zon aer wiber* from Hersart’s collection notebooks (*Aux Sources*, p. 155), the word *itron* ‘lady/nobleman’s wife’ is used instead of *[t]ud* ‘parents’. The idea that the lady of the manor (as no-one knows the true identity of the rich gentleman at this point) wants to meet the young bride seems to make a little more sense here, so it is unclear why Hersart made this change. Unless, of course, the word came from yet another song.

her husband, ‘who is widowed on the day of his wedding’ together with a message that he should not cry and that she wants for nothing and no bad things are happening to her. The fact that she says this at this point makes her look very modest, and could therefore be interpreted as positive characterization. Or it may simply be meant as a contrast with what is to follow. As soon as the musicians step away (presumably taking the wedding ribbon and ring with them), they learn that they have just caused her eternal damnation, because the sacred wedding symbols could have saved her.

The last part of the ballad reads as follows:

*Ann neb a ra tri dimizi,
Tri dimizi bep eureuji,
Ez a d’ann ifern da leski,
...*

‘Who(ever) gets engaged three times, three times without getting married, goes to hell to burn’. This may be interpreted as a piece of indirect characterization of the female protagonist, informing us of her sin and explaining the turn of events in this ballad. The link between her and the sin in question (having been engaged three times – or having had extramarital sexual relations three times, as is explained above) is not directly stated, but it is implied strongly enough. An interesting thing to note is that the word *neb* ‘who(ever)/person’ is not gender-specific – this moral therefore applies both to men and women.

The first of Luzel’s versions of the story²¹² gives a very different impression of the female, here named Janet. Similarly to *Ar plac’h dimezet gand Satan*, the story begins with an image of the viper hissing in the night. Here, however, the viper tells us the moral of the story upfront: “*Na euz dimi nemet unan*” ‘There is but one engagement’. *Ar plac’h dimezet gand Satan* was a little more lenient, but the message remains the same, and it is not gender-specific in this song either.

²¹² Janet Ar Wern version 1, *GBI1*, pp. 26–33.

Janet is going to Gwengamp to break off an engagement when she meets a young gentleman dressed as a peasant. We learn that despite his handsome enough appearance, he has feet 'like a horse', signifying he is the devil. He asks her how many times she has been engaged. She replies she has been engaged eighteen times and that she broke them all off. She then offers to marry him if he wants. This does not reflect at all well on the protagonist – even though we cannot take the number eighteen literally as discussed above, she is clearly portrayed as someone of easy virtue. She goes on to say that there are eighteen tailors at her home making new clothes for her next engagement to take place the following day. And once the clothes are made, Janet does not like them, and she tramples them with her feet. She is clearly depicted as a spoiled and unpleasant person in this song.

The 'dragon/demon' makes an appearance at Janet's home and talks to her parents, informing them that he is their future son-in-law. They are not willing to accept that, but he says he has a contract with her.

On the day of the wedding, as she approaches the altar, she changes from beautiful to 'dark as Lucifer'. The priest asks her whether she has any sins she forgot to mention. She says she denied no sins, but that she was engaged seven times (note the change of number) without being married. She partially acknowledges her fault by saying "*sionaz d'in*" 'pity on me'. The priest wants to know who was her first fiancé and is told it was Ervoanik 'r Bail. The priest then goes to see Ervoanik and asks him to do the right thing and save Janet's soul. He agrees to marry her, but she says she does not recognize this man and that she is with the one she loves - meaning the devil. This passage suggests that she is the only sinner in the story and that the men she has been with are not equally guilty. Since Ervoanik is clearly still single and willing to marry her, she was probably his only one, and we can assume it is the same case with the other men she has been with.

After the wedding, Janet requests that she be rid of her cloak, wedding ribbon and wedding ring because they burn 'like the fire of hell'. This seems to be because they (or at least the latter two) symbolize her bond with the unholy creature that is Satan, and

abandoning them does not condemn her like it does in Hersart's song. However, that function is now performed by her rosary. She gives it to the musician that comes to see her in hell because the rosary, too, burns like fire – presumably because it is holy and she is not. As soon as she surrenders it, she falls into the pit of hell. Although this is a similar idea to the one presented in *Ar plac'h dimezet gand Satan*, it lacks the message about the holiness of marriage or any possibility of salvation for the woman. This idea is hinted at earlier when she is given a chance to marry her first fiancé, but opts for the devil. Unlike the woman in Hersart's song, Janet is clearly characterized as a bad and promiscuous person, and her damnation is entirely of her own doing.

Luzel's second version of this ballad²¹³ presents a different picture. It features many of the same images as the first version, but Janet is shown in a much more positive light.

The story begins in exactly the same way: with the image of the viper hissing in the night and saying that the only right number of engagements is one. This version is a little bit more elaborate on the subject and also explains how any subsequent engagements make the eternal damnation even more absolute. In Luzel's first song, the viper and the devil – referred to as *Aerouant* 'dragon/demon' – are arguably the same character. Here, the link between the two is even more evident, because it is the *(n)aer niber* 'viper' that later invites the musicians to see Janet in hell. Hersart's song lacks any such connection.

The story unfolds with the revelation that Janet is engaged again and going to choose a wedding dress. As she is returning, she meets a young man. They talk, and she invites him to the wedding that is to take place the following day. He drives her home, and asks her to marry him instead. Her answer reflects well on her:

*Na 'z eo ket ebars ann hentjou
A dle bout gret ann dimizjou ;*

'Engagements should not be made on the roads'. He keeps insisting, but she tells him he should ask her parents instead. In her house, without any discussion, he announces himself

²¹³ Janet Ar Wern version 2, *GBI1*, pp. 34–42.

as the future son-in-law and offers them many riches. Janet's parents do not like him very much, and they remark that he has feet like a horse and no white of the eye. However, the sentiment we get from the song is that there is nothing anyone can do to stop the wedding.

The conversation with the priest starts in a similar fashion to the previous song. The new element is that it takes place before the actual ceremony, and the groom clearly identifies himself as Lucifer's son. Like before, Janet admits to having broken off seven engagements (although there is no mention of any specific men). She then remarks that she is not likely to be able to break off this one – she clearly knows her fate and there are signs of repentance.

Just like in the abovementioned songs, we learn of the change from beautiful to 'dark as Lucifer'. The ending is similar to Luzel's first version, albeit more brief. The viper asks Janet what she shall give the musicians who came to see her in hell. She answers that she'll give them her ring and her rosary to be given to her first fiancé. As soon as she parts with these holy symbols, she falls in the pit of hell.

This song is a lot more sympathetic to the woman than Luzel's first version, and even though she is clearly portrayed as a sinner for having broken off seven engagements, we do not get the impression that she is that bad a person because all of her actions within the plot of this song are righteous, such as insisting on proper engagement procedure or thinking of her original fiancé.

Penguern's collection also contains versions of this ballad. Both *An aer wiber*²¹⁴ and *Penneres ar Wouern*²¹⁵ are similar to the songs already discussed, but feature a few new images and themes. *An aer wiber* is the more complex of the two. Its plot seems a little confused at times, but this is generally only due to individual words, and may be ascribed to factors such as tradition. It begins with the familiar image of the viper hissing that the only right number of engagements is one. *Penneres ar Wouern* does not feature the viper and instead

²¹⁴ 'The Viper', *PW*, pp. 312–5.

²¹⁵ 'The Heiress/only daughter of the Gwern', *PW*, pp. 308–310.

starts with the moral on its own. It should be noted that the word *dimeziñ* is only used once in *An aer wiber* and never in *Penneres ar Wouern*, and a French borrowing *promesse* is employed instead. Versions of this word can be found in both Luzel's songs as well, but they both use a version of *dimeziñ* in the opening moral as well as in other parts of the song text. As the origin of Penguern's versions is of a similar diversity to that of the other songs²¹⁶, the predominant use of the French borrowing does not seem to be due to the singers' dialect but could be purely coincidental or influenced by the collector's own preference. Either way, it does seem to rob *Penneres ar Wouern* of the fitting double meaning present in the three songs discussed previously and partially present in *An aer wiber*.

We learn that the woman referred to as *Penn-herex ar Wern* has broken off seven or eight engagements. She is approached by *Jan gorniek* 'horned John', i.e. the devil. She tells him she is going to Gwengamp to buy jewellery and a ribbon, and remarks:

Ganech cavalier zo unan

'You, cavalier, have one!' It is difficult to tell whether this means a wedding ribbon and whether she is referring to a ribbon he is wearing at the point of the conversation. This is much clearer in *Penneres ar Wouern*, where he then offers to give her the ribbon if she agrees to marry him.

The two songs meet again in the following stanza, where he tells her that all she has to do is to sign a contract with her own blood, which she does. The image of the eighteen tailors making a wedding dress for the bride is then present in both of these songs.

In the following six couplets, the woman invites the devil to the garden of her house to pick a bouquet of flowers. He refuses to enter the garden on the grounds that the garden is holy²¹⁷ and that the two of them are not. This clearly marks the woman as a sinner.

²¹⁶ *An aer wiber* was collected in Tréguier and *Penneres ar Wouern* in Carhaix.

²¹⁷ The garden is holy because it contains 'a flower with Jesus's name on its head and Mary's name on its leaf'.

The following section features a major difference between the two songs. The woman talks to her parents. In *An aer wiber*, the song text reads as follows:

*c'hwi ma mam poa laret din
Pa vichen dimeet eureuji*

*med c'hwi ma zad c'hwi na poa ked
ken koulz a me c'hwi zo damnet*

*C'hwi poa laret dime choas unan vesk kant
na bete ma choazfen ma c'hoant*

*A breman meus choazet unan
Da vont gantan da kreis an tan*

'You, mother, have told me that once I'm engaged, I should get married. But you, father, you have not [told me this]: Just like me, you are damned! You have told me to choose one among a hundred until I find what I like! And now I have chosen one with whom I will go to the fire [of hell]!' Not only does this section repeat the opening moral, it also blames the woman's father for giving her immoral advice.

Instead, *Penneres ar Wouern* gives us a much shortened version with a different overall meaning. The woman's mother says:

*- Laret moa dac'h, ma merchek koant,
choas eur pried herve ho c'hoant.*

*Tolet plê pe choaset unan
ho kac'fe da lesquinñ dan tan.*

'I have told you, my dear girl, to choose a spouse that you like. Be careful when you choose one that would send you to burn in hell.' The motif of bad advice is absent from this song and neither do these verses repeat or support the moral of the story.

When the woman approaches the altar, she changes from beautiful to 'dark as Lucifer' and later 'as death' in *An aer wiber*, and in *Penneres ar Wouern*, they are both described as 'dark/black as coal'. The priest subsequently remarks on the similarity of the woman's complexion and the colour of sin in both of these songs. The woman tells the priest she thinks she is going to hell, after which the ground opens up underneath her, and

she falls in. This is where *Penneres ar Wouern* ends. *An aer wiber* offers another few verses in which the woman (either already in hell or about to fall in) gives a musician her ring and her rosary because ‘they cause [her] much pain’ and tells him to go tell her father that he has a stool ready for him in hell – a repetition of the fact of his damnation for telling her to “shop around” instead of marrying the first man with whom she had relations.

Similarly to the second version of Luzel’s *Janet Ar Wern*, the song is quite sympathetic towards the female protagonist, and there are elements of pity, although here her sins are more apparent, because she marries the devil of her own volition.

The motif of the sanctity of wedding symbols is for the most part absent from these two songs. Although *An aer wiber* mentions the ring (and the rosary, which is a religious symbol), it makes no link between surrendering these items and eternal damnation. Although this idea is present to some extent in Luzel’s two versions of *Janet Ar Wern*, only *Ar Plac’h Dimezet Gand Satan* features a clearly stated direct causality between surrendering wedding symbols and being damned forever.²¹⁸

The following four songs are distinctly different from the songs already discussed here because they feature no wedding. Luzel’s *Ann hini oa et da welet he vestrez d’ann ifern*²¹⁹, Besco’s *An hini oa et da velet e vestrez d’an ifern*²²⁰ and its alternative ending collected by Le Goff from Gouézec²²¹ and Penguern’s *An Ivern*²²² are clearly versions of the same ballad despite the many differences.

The story can be summarized as follows: Two young people are in love, the woman dies, after which the man becomes a monk and prays to be able to see his love again. A supernatural being appears to him and asks him how much he is willing to give to have his

²¹⁸ There is another, much more concise, version of this ballad originating in the department of Vannes: Jannet en Trémarek, collected by Fañch Kadig and published by “La Paroisse Bretonne de Paris”. Paris: 1907. Many of the recurring motifs are absent in this version. It does, however, mention the various wedding (ring, ribbon, belt) and religious symbols (cross, rosary) in more detail, but the connection between surrendering them and being damned is very weak or absent.

²¹⁹ ‘The one who went to see his love in hell’, *GBI1*, pp. 44–7.

²²⁰ Collected by Canon Besco, (Pérennès, 1938) pp 212–7.

²²¹ Pérennès, 1938. pp. 216–7.

²²² ‘Hell’, *PW*, pp. 48–9.

wish granted. He says he is not rich but offers to give the gilded paten. He is then transported to hell where he meets his girlfriend. The woman describes the severity of her suffering in hell and communicates the moral of the story.

There are various differences between these songs. First, they each describe the young lovers' relationship in a different way. Luzel's version is the most immoral one:

*Em darempredi rent en ho bugaleaj,
Dre ma tenent en oad, a rent c'hoas davantaj,*

*Em darempredi rent koulz en noz hag en de,
Hep diskouez nep donjanz euz a c'balloud Done.*

'They would see each other when they were children and even more so when they grew up. They would see each other as often at night as during the day without any sign of fear of God's power.' These two couplets are a clear reference to sexual intercourse. The version collected by Canon Besco only mentions that they 'loved each other perfectly' without any more detail, and in Penguern's version, they talk about getting married, but the woman dies before an official engagement of any kind.

Minor differences include the identity of the supernatural being (devil, angel or simply messenger), the image of "*serpanted an ifern*" 'the serpents of hell' in Luzel's and Besco's songs, which better connects these songs to the aforementioned ballads featuring a viper. These two songs also contain a passage in which the man asks the woman for one last kiss, but is denied his wish because it would deliver him to hell as well. In the alternative ending collected by Le Goff, however, he is told that his plea for a kiss is the reason he, too, is going to hell. He then has one last day on Earth, in which he ponders upon his own sins which he defines as "*Ar gloar hag ar vanite*" 'pride and vanity'.

The other versions offer a different lesson. Penguern's *An Ivern* contains a gender-neutral moral 'to be good and perfect'²²³. In Luzel's song, the woman sends a message to her sister to 'not be too familiar with the suitors'²²⁴ or else she, too, will be damned. The

²²³ "*Beza fur a parfai*".

²²⁴ "*Na vo ket familier re gant ar galanted*".

moral in Besco's version is almost identical – 'not to be too weak-minded with the suitors'²²⁵. This seems to imply that suitors want to corrupt and that a woman must resist them. It is important to mention that both these morals are gender-specific and therefore implying a double standard, which was not the case with the five songs discussed in the previous section²²⁶ and Penguern's *An Ivern*.

It is also important to note that the man's sins in these two songs are without doubt at least as severe as the woman's²²⁷, but the ballads seem to impose different rules on men and women. The man's giving away of the paten (a religious symbol) that is not even his to give seems to have no implications either. In contrast, Le Goff's alternative ending has the man punished for his sins in the end.²²⁸ The five songs discussed above do not necessarily provide evidence of the men's sinful behaviour, given that the original fiancé in *Janet Ar Wern* (version 1) would have proceeded with the wedding had he not been rejected by Janet. The immoral advice of the woman's father in *An aer wiber* results in his damnation as well, and so there is no direct evidence of double standards either. The lack of double standards in *Ar plac'h dimezet gand Satan* is therefore by no means exceptional.

Hersart's song does not seem remarkable in its composition of motifs, and it is not by any means the only version to portray the woman in a positive and sympathetic way. It does, however, drive the positive characterization to such an extent as to partially confuse or obscure the plot by abstaining from explaining the woman's sins. There is a strong case for a deliberate change of individual expressions and perhaps the omitting of certain parts of the plot in order to portray the woman in a more positive and sympathetic light. It also features a much more elaborate explanation of the sanctity of wedding symbols and the

²²⁵ "... vout ket keñ fragil a-andred ar galanted".

²²⁶ *Ar plac'h dimezet gand Satan*, both versions of *Janet Ar Wern*, *An aer wiber* and *Penneres ar Wouern*.

²²⁷ The allusions to sexual intercourse in Luzel's song have been explained above, and Besco's song describes the woman as *fidel* 'faithful', which suggests he was her only partner. This is later confirmed by her declaration "*Me na n'on ket bet fragil 'med a-andred unan*" 'I have only been weak-minded with one [suitor]'.

²²⁸ It would be interesting to see the whole of Le Goff's song as it was collected (*Les Annales de Bretagne* only features the ending) to compare it with Besco's version and compare the language used to describe the woman – it is possible that it would make a case for the man's innocence up until the point where he asks for a kiss.

link between surrendering them and being damned than any of the other songs. This may act as an explanation for the woman's fate in the partial absence of any more logical explanation, such as premarital sex, which seems only to feature in *Ar plac'h dimezet gand Satan* as a kind of afterthought not connected to the actual plot. The name of the ballad is in itself a sign of the truth obscured by Hersart's editing. Of the songs featuring a wedding, *Ar plac'h dimezet gand Satan* is the only one in which the woman does not actually marry the devil.

2.3. Ar Breur Mager

Many versions of this song have been collected. In her thesis, Éva Guillorel mentions knowing of 98 songs in the Breton language alone²²⁹, although different versions of this story or its composite parts have also been collected in various places around the world. Mary-Ann Constantine's paper 'Ballads Crossing Borders: La Villemarqué and the 'Breton Lenore'²³⁰ discusses this ballad and its international counterparts, in particular with regards to the relationship between oral and written sources and the translation between the two around Europe, which will be discussed in more detail.

The plot of *Ar Breur Mager*²³¹ comprises four major motifs described below, of which the other versions both from Brittany and from the rest of the world contain one or more; however, the combination of motifs seen in *Ar Breur Mager* seems to be unique and not seen in any other version. Looking at all the different versions would be beyond the scope of this thesis, and therefore a selection of the most prominent ones will be examined and compared to Hersart's *Ar Breur Mager*, in particular relating to the portrayal of women.

In *Ar Breur Mager*, a girl called Gwennolaik is sent to a fountain to fetch water very early in the morning by her stepmother. There, she meets a knight who asks her whether she is married. After a negative answer, he gives her a golden ring and tells her to announce her engagement to a knight returning from Nantes. He was injured in battle and promises to come back for her when he is healed. When Gwennolaik returns home and looks at the ring, she realises it belongs to her beloved foster brother.

The knight does not return and the stepmother eventually forces Gwennolaik to marry Jobik the stable boy. We learn that the knight died of his injuries. After the wedding with Jobik but before the marriage is consummated, Gwennolaik throws away her new wedding ring, tears her wedding ribbon and runs away. She is then found by her foster

²²⁹ Éva Guillorel. *La complainte et la plainte : chansons de tradition orale et archives criminelles*, Université Rennes 2, 2008, p. 205.

²³⁰ *Translation and Literature* vol. 8, no. 2 (1999). pp. 197–216.

²³¹ 'The Foster Brother'.

brother (presumably his ghost) and travels with him on his horse to the afterlife, where she is reunited with her dead mother and sisters. The discarding of wedding symbols does not seem to have any negative implications in this song as opposed to *Ar Plac'h Dimezet Gand Satan* discussed in the previous chapter, which could partly be attributed to the fact that Gwennolaik's marriage to Jobik was not valid as such: it was never consummated and she was already engaged to another.

Luzel published two versions of this song in *Gwerzïou Breiz-Izel* under the name *Ar Plac'h Hi Daou Bried*²³². In the first version, after the meeting at the fountain, the man leads the girl to a willow bush to “chat”. The man then tells the girl to tell her stepmother, when asked about the delay, that the water of the fountain was disturbed by the horse of a knight returning from Nantes – yet another metaphor or euphemism for sexual intercourse.

The man comes back and arrives after the end of a wedding. He knocks on the bride's door and explains that he is her first fiancé, and she lets him in. Even though *Ar Plac'h Hi Daou Bried* starts with the same motifs as *Ar Breur Mager*, the girl is portrayed in a very different light as discussed below.

The second version of Luzel's *Ar Plac'h Hi Daou Bried* offers yet another picture. After the knight leads the girl to a bush, he gives her two or three hundred golden coins and a golden ring, and tells her to tell her stepmother that she is married and that he will return in seven years. He returns after her wedding and knocks on the door. She refuses to open, saying that she is lying next to her husband. Then the door is opened and they see each other, their hearts break, presumably killing them both.

In both of these songs published by Luzel, the meeting by the fountain seems to be a case of seduction and sexual intercourse takes place, which seems not to be the case in Hersart's *Ar Breur Mager*, despite the presence of one sexual metaphor discussed below.

²³² ‘The woman with two husbands’, François-Marie Luzel, *Gwerzïou Breiz-Izel*, Vol. 1, É. Corfmart, Lorient, 1874, pp. 266–268.

*Gwerz Eur Plac'h Iaouank Touellet*²³³ offers another perspective. It starts almost exactly the same as the previous song; however, right after the girl is led to the bush, she knows that she has lost something precious. The man then offers her five hundred golden coins that he found on his journey, and presumably she does not take them because she says that she will never find what she has lost here. He then offers to give her wine that he received from his godmother. She refuses, saying that she would rather drink water from the fountain than drink wine with a man that she does not love. We can therefore interpret this episode not as seduction, as could have been the case in Luzel's songs, but as rape.

*Feunteun Ar Wasc'halek*²³⁴ is yet another very different version of the same song. The girl meets a man at the fountain, he leads her to a bush and sexual intercourse takes place. He then gives her a hundred golden coins for the baby that will be born. She is worried about her stepmother's reaction when she comes home. And indeed, her stepmother throws her out. The girl then goes to stay with her godmother. The godmother is convinced that the girl looks ill, and the girl eventually admits that the lord's cleric made her pregnant. The godmother then writes to the cleric, pressuring him to marry the girl. He blames the lord's page, so the next godmother's letter is addressed to him. There is a wedding and straight after it the page returns to war for seven years. When he comes back, the girl has remarried. He knocks on her door and tells her that her first husband is back. She eventually opens the door and jumps to his arms, where she dies suddenly. The page then tells his servant to kill him. The servant refuses, but the page dies anyway.

All of these songs start with the same motif of the girl meeting a man by a fountain. This corresponds to T35.1 (Fountain (well) as lovers' rendezvous) in Thompson's *Motif-index of folk-literature*. The motif of the stepmother is also present (P282). *Gwerz Eur Plac'h*

²³³ 'A Cheated Girl's Lament', *Kanaouennoù Pobl*, Paris, 1959. Collected by Alfred Bourgeois before 1900.

²³⁴ 'The Fountain of Gwashalec'. This song was sung by Marc'harit Fulup and collected by Luzel, but not published by him. The transcribed song text from Luzel's notebook was published in Éva Guillourel's *La Complainte et la plainte*, p. 142.

Iaonank Tonellet ends after this episode. The other versions continue to include polyandry (T146), which is combined with the motif of a matchmaker (T53.0.1) in *Ar Breur Mager* and *Feunteun Ar Wasc'halek*. This is where *Ar Breur Mager* starts to diverge considerably from the other versions. The other versions all feature a returning first husband discovering that his wife has remarried, after which they all provide a different ending. In contrast, the returned lover in *Ar Breur Mager* is dead (E310 – Dead lover's friendly return) and he comes to take Gwennolaik with him on his horse (E215 – The Dead Rider (Lenore)).

The provenance of this last part of *Ar Breur Mager* has been discussed in Constantine's aforementioned paper. She outlines several possible sources and ballads featuring the same motif – Bürger's *Lenore*, Balkan and Greek ballads, but also numerous ballads from various places in the north-west of Europe including Brittany.²³⁵ Hersart mentions a range of these ballads in his short introduction to *Ar Breur Mager*, which clearly shows that he was aware of the affiliation. The presence of other ballads of the *Lenore* type within the tradition of Brittany seems a strong enough argument against the notion that Hersart fabricated this last part entirely or based it directly on Bürger's *Lenore*. It does, however, imply a certain level of editing on his part with the traditional *Lenore* at the heart of his inspiration.

Even though all of these songs have very similar plots and share several of their motifs, the portrayal of women that they offer is very different. First, I shall discuss the characterization of the girl.

The vast majority of the story in *Ar Breur Mager* is told in the third person, which differentiates it from the other mentioned songs which are all in the first person for most part. Hersart's ballad features one verse in the first person singular (“*Ha me iaouang ha sod...*” – a more detailed discussion of this particular stanza is given below). Constantine points out this slip as both evidence of Hersart's polishing work, but also of his close involvement with the tradition ‘slipping in’ despite his efforts of ‘translating’ the ballad into a literary

²³⁵ See ‘Ballads Crossing Borders’, p. 210.

text.²³⁶ Despite the otherwise lack of first-person voice, the focus in *Ar Breur Mager* is almost never taken away from the girl. There is a brief episode in which we learn of the death of her foster brother, and those are the only eight verses of plot happening away from her. It is a similar case with *Gwerz Eur Plac'h Iaouank Touellet*, although it is a much shorter song text, so this is probably less significant. In the two versions published by Luzel, the girl is the protagonist only in the first part, and the second part focuses on the returning man. *Feunteun Ar Wasc'halek* is very similar to these two songs, with the exception of having a middle part concentrating on the godmother (in third person).

An interesting point is that Hersart's version that focuses almost exclusively on the girl is, in fact, named after the foster brother, whereas the two versions published by Luzel and Bourgeois's version are named after the girl. I would like to suggest that one possible reason why Hersart named this song 'The Foster Brother' was a search for a unique, memorable name while avoiding names that would reflect badly on the girl, such as Luzel's 'The Woman with Two Husbands'. However, the fact that none of the other versions of this song including the fragments from the Keransquer manuscript studied by Laurent²³⁷ mention a foster brother suggests another plausible explanation. It is possible that naming the song thus was Hersart's way of justifying the addition of the motif of the foster brother to a base more similar to the other songs, which did not originally include it. The origin of this transformation of the protagonists into foster siblings is unclear, but Constantine suggests that "this fundamental change in the character of the lovers contributes to the general chastening of the piece"²³⁸. Together with an apparent lack of sexual images, it helps to portray their love as pure, which by extension leads to a more positive portrayal of the girl.

Bourgeois's title 'A Cheated Girl's Lament' is the one that is the most sympathetic to the girl, which brings us to the next point. Hersart's version of the ballad is very

²³⁶ 'Ballads Crossing Borders', p. 205.

²³⁷ *Aux Sources*, pp. 50–51 and p. 84.

²³⁸ 'Ballads Crossing Borders', p. 204.

sympathetic, which is a feature that Luzel's versions lack. The language is very emotive. She is described as "*ker reiz ha ker kaer*" 'so good/chaste and so beautiful', then as "*plac'hig paour*" 'poor girl'. Other examples include "*sionaz d'ei*" 'alas to her' and "*Troue oa he gwelet*" 'It was pity to see her'. She herself reacts to her situation very emotionally. When she is being forced to marry the stable boy, she says: "*mervel rinn gand ar c'hlac'har*" 'I shall die of sorrow'. At her wedding, she 'cried her heart out', and so did everyone attending it. It is very clear that the wedding is a disaster and that it definitely goes against her wishes, as she makes it very clear that she wants to wait for her foster brother. Many of these instances seem to be of a more literary nature and therefore possibly of Hersart's addition. Constantine explains the "differences between the 'authentic' and the literary versions [as the literary versions having] the usual tendency to explain and describe rather than imply",²³⁹ which seems to be the case here. The emotive language helps to portray the girl as a martyr.

In the two versions published by Luzel, there is no explanation as to why the girl marries someone else, but there certainly is not any notion of it being a forced marriage. In the version sung by Marc'harit Fulup, the girl does not seem to particularly care to whom she gets married, even though the fact that she dies at the end suggests some emotional attachment to her first husband (and her second but not last boyfriend) – the page. The last verse of this song even pities her second husband for becoming a widower on his wedding night.

Possibly the greatest difference in the characterization of the girl is the absence of sex in *Ar Breur Mager*. In the last verse, her dead body is described with the word *glan* meaning 'pure', suggesting that she died a virgin. Some of this difference may shed some light on Hersart's techniques as an editor. There is a phrase that plays a role in foreshadowing sexual intercourse in both versions of *Ar Plac'h Hi Daou Bried* and in *Gwerz Eur Plac'h Iaouank Touellet*. See the version given in Luzel's second version:

²³⁹ 'Ballads Crossing Borders', p. 203. This is also one of the main arguments of *Fragments and Meaning in Traditional Song* (Constantine & Porter), Oxford University Press, New York, 2003. Traditional songs use formulaic language because they draw on shared knowledge and cultural values.

*Hag hen ' c'houll diganin: — Plac'hik, ha c'hui 'zo dimet? —
Ha me oe sot a-walc'h da laret na oann ket.*

‘And he asked me: Young girl, are you married? And I was quite silly to say that I was not.’ In all of these three songs, after the man asks the girl whether she is married, the following verse is composed of two parts. The second part is the answer ‘I am not’, and the first part suggests that the girl’s answer was due to her being *sot* ‘silly’ or *iaouank* ‘young’, meaning that it was an unwise answer that would assumingly lead to the man wanting to have sex with her.²⁴⁰

In *Ar Breur Mager*, this stanza is split into two:

*— Iec'hed mad d'hoc'h plac'hik; ha c'hui a zo dimezet? —
Ha me iaouang ha sod a respontaz: — N'ouzon ket.
— Ha c'hui zo dimezet leveret d'in, me ho ped.
— Sal-ho-kraz, otro ker, dimezet c'hoaz n'em onn ket.*

‘Hello to you, young girl. Are you married? I was young and silly, so I answered: I do not know. Please tell me whether you are married. I am not yet married, dear sir.’ The girl’s first answer, preceded by the mention of her being *iaouang ha sod* ‘young and silly’, is *N'ouzon ket* ‘I do not know’, which actually is a silly and inexperienced answer to whether or not one is married, and so it does not suggest any unwise answer that might have serious negative consequences such as rape. In the second stanza, the knight repeats his question and the girl tells him that she is not married. This splitting into two stanzas seems to be unique to *Ar Breur Mager*. Hersart keeps the same phrase found in the other versions, but by avoiding juxtaposing it with the other part of the verse, he changes the implication of it.

The image of the water of the fountain being troubled by the knight’s horse appears to be a similar case at first; however, the version in *Ar Breur Mager* is by no means unique. In the first version of *Ar Plac'h Hi Daou Bried*, this image is used as an explanation of why the girl is delayed, and therefore it is a direct allusion to sexual intercourse. In the second version of this song, just as in *Gwerz Eur Plac'h Iaouank Tonellet* and in *Ar Breur*

²⁴⁰ This may be interpreted as a very subtle suggestion that the girl is partly to blame for her rape, i.e. victim blaming.

Mager, this image is used before the meeting takes place, therefore it probably cannot directly allude to sex, although the symbolism of the image remains. It can be interpreted as a foreshadowing device for the events to come. In this particular case, Luzel's first version is the odd one out. This may suggest some editing on his part, but it may just as easily be unrelated to editing and may simply reflect differences between the different versions sung. Constantine offers the presence of the image of troubled water in Hersart's ballad as another piece of evidence of his close work with the tradition – despite his efforts at chastening the piece, this image nonetheless ended up in his song text.²⁴¹ An interesting thing to note is that neither the image of troubled water nor the motif of the man asking the girl whether she is married are present in *Feunteun Ar Wasc'halek*.

The girl is not the only woman in the plot. The stepmother offers yet another case for the uniqueness of Hersart's song text. All of the other versions mentioned include a verse that directly says that the stepmother is “*ar wasa ' zo ganef*” ‘the worst ever born’²⁴² or something very similar. There is no such claim in *Ar Breur Mager*. The stepmother is not portrayed as a nice person, but her portrayal is done through her actions instead. We see her force Gwennolaik to marry Jobig and she also seems to be the reason why Gwennolaik has to work so hard every day, including fetching water from the fountain.²⁴³

This latter connection is also present in all the other versions except the first version of *Ar Plac'h Hi Daou Bried*. However, the difference is that these other songs contain the notion that the stepmother is to blame for the incident because she is the reason the girl goes to fetch water so early when it is still dark outside. There are no elements of blame in *Ar Breur Mager*. Whether this is Hersart's editing or simply coincidence is difficult to tell.

²⁴¹ ‘Ballads Crossing Borders’, p. 205.

²⁴² *Ar Plac'h Hi Daou Bried* version 1.

²⁴³ Gwennolaik's hard life is described in some detail, which seems to be another example of Hersart's more literary approach, and it therefore suggests a certain level of editing. Arguably, its aim is the same as in the case of sympathetic language above – to emphasise the girl's suffering and therefore martyrdom.

The character of the godmother from *Feunteun Ar Wasc'halek* is not present in *Ar Breur Mager*, but it could be argued that the stepmother in Hersart's song takes on a similar role when she arranges a wedding for the girl. Her reasons for looking for a husband for Gwennolaik are not explained and they do not make sense unless we assume that it is done out of spite. It therefore seems like there may have been a reason, such as the girl's pregnancy like in *Feunteun Ar Wasc'halek*, but the reason was edited out.

Despite the existence of so many versions of this song, *Ar Breur Mager* seems to be unique amongst them in several ways. It offers a very positive image of the protagonist girl and portrays her as a martyr, as opposed to a disloyal and easily seduced woman in the other extreme, as is the case in the first version of *Ar Plac'h Hi Daou Bried*. The positive portrayal in *Ar Breur Mager* is achieved through sympathetic language, plot elements and possibly the order or absence of certain verses. The versions included in the Keransquer manuscript studied by Donatien Laurent in *Aux Sources Du Barzaz-Breiz* are very short and much more similar to the second version of Luzel's *Ar Plac'h Hi Daou Bried*. It is clear that *Ar Breur Mager* has undergone a considerable amount of editing, especially in the form of combining motifs and plot elements previously not found together. A note in Laurent's book²⁴⁴ mentions another version known to Hersart that contains yet completely different motifs, and so it is difficult to draw any definitive conclusions. However, the combination of motifs in *Ar Breur Mager* is unique among the other songs discussed in this chapter, and it creates a plot that is a lot more similar to *Lenore*. The apparent chastening of the motifs it shares with the other ballads studied here seems to be in part a way that allows him to modify the plot sufficiently for this purpose. *Ar Breur Mager* is not a story about rape or seduction (meeting at the fountain), nor is it about polyandry (a woman with two husbands). Instead, as Hersart puts it in his introduction, it is a story of “*devoir, l'obéissance à la religion du serment*” ‘duty, obedience to the sanctity of an oath’. Constantine's argument that Hersart was recreating the traditional *Lenore* and possibly using Bérger's ‘grotesque and

²⁴⁴ *Aux Sources*, p. 84.

ferocious' *Lenore* featuring an undeserving protagonist ignoring Christian advice as a negative influence and an example of what not to do²⁴⁵ is therefore entirely convincing. As Constantine summarises it, "The result ... is a 'truer', more original version of the 'Lenore' story than the morally dubious German product".²⁴⁶

²⁴⁵ 'Ballads Crossing Borders', pp. 208–209.

²⁴⁶ *Fragments and Meaning in Traditional Song*, p. 45.

Conclusion

This exploration of the role of women in the *Barzaaz Breiz* has raised a number of interesting issues about Hersart's editorial practices. The song texts in Hersart's *chef-d'œuvre* are the product of a fusion of Breton tradition and the author's own input. This interaction is at the heart of the uniqueness of this extraordinarily complex publication, and the overwhelmingly positive portrayal of women is among its notable features.

I have shown that the portrayal of female characters in the *Barzaaz Breiz* follows recurring patterns, giving the various character types certain shared characteristics. As we have seen in Part One, most of the women are described as extremely virtuous. This is occasionally achieved through direct references to individual positive characteristics such as describing characters using adjectives like “*fur*” ‘good/well-behaved’, but much more often it is achieved through their actions displaying virtues such as loyalty or chastity and through connected symbols such as colours and animals associated with positive things. As a general rule, the archetypal daughter of the *Barzaaz Breiz* is portrayed as obedient and the sister as loving, affectionate and helpful. The archetypal wife is fully devoted to her husband and loyal beyond death, and the mother is strong and resourceful. Morality and chastity tend to be preferred over survival, leading to many of the women in the *Barzaaz Breiz* being portrayed as martyrs or living saints. This supports Constantine's statement in my research question.

Although the *Barzaaz Breiz* does contain bad or immoral female characters, their portrayal is often subdued, and their bad character is implied through their actions rather than stated directly. Plot elements that could shed some more light on their vices and failings are omitted or confused to the extent that some female characters that could have been described as immoral end up being portrayed in a much more sympathetic way, which is particularly true of the three songs studied in detail in Part 2.

The language used in folk songs, is very economic and formulaic, which is equally true of Breton folk songs, and character portrayal is therefore often dependent on a few single expressions or symbols; the slightest change or variant may give a very different impression of the character. I have demonstrated this by noting Hersart's substitution of "*durzunal*" 'dove' for 'Lucifer' and the omission of the colour black in his description of the unfortunate bride in *Ar Plac'h Dimezet Gand Satan* as well as by his use of the word "*glan*" 'pure' in the last stanza of *Ar Breur Mager*, making a virgin beyond doubt of the protagonist of a song that in all other versions discussed in Chapter 2.3 is about polyandry, sex or rape.

In Part 2, I have demonstrated that instances of Hersart's editing and the way it impacts on the portrayal of women can be identified through detailed study of the song texts and their comparison with other collected versions, in many cases with a sufficiently high level of certainty. They tend to show that his 'improvements' of the songs also improve the female characters and bring a uniformity to the archetypes typical for the *Barzaz Breiz*.

In the three chapters in Part 2, I have identified different editing techniques used by Hersart with impact on the portrayal of women and suggested possible motivations behind these instances of editing. In *Loiza hag Abalard*, omissions of plot elements present in other songs such as spoiling crops and disloyalty to parents as well as additions of affectionate language when talking about Abalard seem to historicise the ballad by making it fit the historical characters of Héloïse and Abélard. In *Ar Plac'h Dimezet Gand Satan*, the obscure and seemingly incomplete plot – unusual for the *Barzaz Breiz* – seems to point to a reluctance to talk about premarital sex. And finally, *Ar Breur Mager* seems to be an amalgamation of motifs originating from different songs in an attempt to recreate a much more 'complete and perfect' Breton version of the famous German Volkslied *Lenore* – with the additional effect of ridding this song of any references to sexual intercourse.

The three case studies in Part 2 open up questions about possible patterns in Hersart's editing techniques. It would be interesting to use the same methodology on all of

the songs in the *Barzaz Breiz* that have counterparts in other collections to see whether there are any additional similarly distinctive editing techniques and whether any patterns can be identified both in relation to the portrayal of women, but possibly also relating to other themes.

An additional possibility for further research is a more detailed study of Hersart's motivations for these changes affecting the portrayal of women from a more biographical perspective encompassing Catholicism, Breton nationalism and Hersart's relationship with women, in particular his love for his mother. These things undoubtedly shaped his perception of what women are and also what Breton women should be, which in turn shaped the *Barzaz Breiz*.

I hope that my thesis has shown that even after nearly eighteen decades since its first publication and well over a century of academic scrutiny, the *Barzaz Breiz* still offers many opportunities for research and that the veritable gems that are Hersart's song texts should not be overlooked. *Querelle* aside, they are the product of love and of Hersart's life's work – meticulously sculpted from the rich tradition of the Breton people into a form that he considered perfect.

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Appendix 1. Part One

Appendix 1.1. Table of themes and archetypes

A note on the numbering of the songs: The number used in the 3rd edition of *Barzaz Breiz* is used except where it is an obvious typo. There is no number 13 in the book; however, number 14 is used twice. I therefore took the liberty of changing the first 14 into a 13 in the list below. The same is true about the missing number 1-3 in the second section. However, the number 18 in the first section is skipped altogether, and so the following songs have not been renumbered and number 18 is missing from the list.

Legend:

X	=	Present and part of the plot
.	=	Present, but of little importance to the plot
o	=	Implied, secondary archetype
c	=	Implied, but not mentioned or explored

#	Name	Young girl	Daughter	Sister	Sweetheart	Mistreated girl	Wife/Fiancée	Loyal wife/Fiancée	Strong wife	Unfaithful woman	Widow	Mother	Mother-son	Mourning mother	Strong mother	Stepmother	Woman in distress	Female saint	Religious woman	Noblewoman	Female antagonist	Violence by a woman	No women
01	Ar Rannou			.								.	.	.	.	.			.	.
02	Diougan Gwenc'hlan																		.	.			X
03	Aotrou Nann hag Ar Gorrigan						X	X			X	X	X	X	X				.	X	X		
04	Ar Bugel Lacc'hiet											X	X	X	X			X	X				
05	Ar C'horred																						X
06	Livadén Geris	X	X		X																o		
07	Gwin ar C'hallaoued																						X
08	Bale Arzur		.									.											.
09	Bosen Elliant						X		X			X	X	X	X								
10-1	Marzin Enn He Gavel	X				X						o								X			
10-2	Marzin-Divinour																						X
10-3	Marzin-Barz	.	.									X	X		X					.			
10-4	Distro Marzin																						X
11	Lez-Breiz	X	c	X								X	X	X		.		X	.				
12	Drouk-Kinnig Neumenoïou																						X
13	Alan-Al-Louarn																						X
14	Bran											X	X	X	X					X			
15	Ar Falc'hon						X		X			X	X		X								X
16	Loiza hag Abalard				o																X	X	
17	Ann Distro Euz A Vro-Zaoz											X	X	X						.			
19	Greg Ar C'hroazour						X	X									X						
20	Ann Eostik				o		X			X													
21	Ar Plac'h Dimezet Gand Satan				c		X			o													
22	Ar Breur Mager	X		o	o	X	X	X				.					X	X		X	X		
23	Kloarek Rohan					X	X					o					X		o				
24	Ann Tri Manac'h Ruz	X				X						.					X						
25	Jannedik-Flamm											.	c										X
26	Stourm Ann Tregont																						X
27	Ann Erminik																						.
28	Baron Jaouioz	X	X	X		X						X	c	c				.	.				
29	Fillorez Ann Aotrou Gwesklen	X	X	.		X						X		c	X		X		X				
30	Gwaz Aotrou Gwesklen	X		c	.																		
31	Ann Alarc'h																			.			.
32	Seizen Eured					X	X			X		.		c				.					
33	Azenorik-C'hlaaz	X	o		X	X	X	X				.	c	c				.	X	.			
34	Paotred Plouïeo	.				.					.	.	.					.					.
35	Seiz Gwengamp				c	X		X										X	X	X		X	
36	Ened Rosporden																						X
37	Jenovefa Rustefan	X	c	c	X	X						X	X		X			.	o				

#	Name	Young girl	Daughter	Sister	Sweetheart	Mistreated girl	Wife/Fiancée	Loyal wife/fiancée	Strong wife	Unfaithful woman	Widow	Mother	Mother-in-law	Mourning mother	Stepmother	Woman in distress	Female saint	Religious woman	Noblewoman	Female antagonist	Violence by a woman	No women
38	Itroun Varia Folgoat	X	c	c		X	c					.					X	o	X		.	
39	Ar Re Unaned																.					X
40	Fontanella	X		.	.	X	X	X			X	c	c				.		.			
41	Penn-Herez Keroulaz	X	X		X	X	X	o			c	X		X	X			.	X			
42	Floc'h Loeiz Trizek	X		X														o				
43	Markiz Gwerand	X			X		X	X				.		c				X				
44	Maronad Ann Aotrou Nevet						X	X			X	o										
45	Emzivadez Lannion	X		.		X																
46	Maro Pontkalek																.					X
47	Emgann Sant-Kast																					X
48	Iannik Skolan	X		.		X						X	X	c								
49	Pardon Saint-Fiakr	X				o	c					.	c	c			X					
50	Kanaouen Al Levier	.			.							.	c	.								.
51	Al Labourerien																					X
52	Ar Belek Forbannet																.					.
53	Ar Re C'hlaez	.				.	c					X	X				.	.				.
54	Ar Chouanted	.															.					.
55	Eur Gentel Vad						X				X	c	c									
56	Bleuniou Mae	X															.	X				
57	Ann Amzer Dremenet										X	X			X	X	.	.				
01-1	Ar Goulenn	.	c	.								.										.
01-2	Ar Gouriz	.					.															
01-3	Son Ann Daol	X	c		X					X		.					.			o		
01-4	Kentel Ar Beorien											X	c				X					
01-5	Son Fest Ann Arvel										X							X				
02	Son Fest Miz Even	X			X					X												
03	Son Al Leur-Nevez	X			X							c										
04	Kentel Fest Ar Vugale			.																		.
05	Ann Hollaika	X			X							.						.				
06	Troad Ann Eginane		.				.					.						.
07	Ar C'hakous	X			X					X										o		
08	Melinerez Pontaro	X			X					c												
09	Ann Droug-Hirnez	.			.							.										
10	Ar C'hloarek Paour	X			X					X		.										
11	Mellezourou Arc'hant	X										X										
12	Kroaz Ann Hent	X			X																	
13	Ann Drouk-Rans	X			X					X												
14	Ar Gwennilied	X			X																	
01	Buhez Sant Ronan	.				.	o					o								X	X	
02	Sant Eflamm hag Ar Roue Arzur						X	X				.					X	X	X			
03	Tour Ann Arvor	X	c				X	X				X	X		X	X	o		X	X		
04	Kimiad Ann Ene																					X
05	Kanaouen Ann Anaon		.									.					.					
06	Ann Ifern		.									.										
07	Ar Baradoz	.					.				.						.
	Klemvan Itron Nizon											o						o	X			

Appendix 2. Part Two

Appendix 2.1. Loiza hag Abalard

Appendix 2.1.1. Loiza hag Abalard

Published by Théodore Hersart de la Villemarqué

Source: Hersart de la Villemarqué, Théodore. *Barzaz Breiz = Chants populaires de la Bretagne*, 8th rep. Paris: Didier, 1883. pp. 135-138.

Ne oann nemed daouzek vloa pa guitiz ti ma zad,
Pa oann oet gand ma c'hloarek, ma Abalardik mad.

Pa oann-me oet da Naonet gand ma dousik kloarek
Ne ouienn ies, ma Doue, nemed ar brezonek;

Ne ouienn tra, ma Doue, met laret ma fater,
Pa oann-me plac'hik bihan e ti ma zad er ger,

Hogen breman, disket onn, disket onn mad a-grenn;
Me oar Galleg ha Latin, me oar skriva ha lenn;

Ia lenn e levr ann Aviel ha skriva mad ha preek,
Ha sakri ar bara-kann kerkouls ha peb beleg;

Ha miret ouz ar beleg da lar he oferen,
Ha skloumo ann alc'houlten e kreiz hag enn daoubenn.

Me oar kaout ann aour melen, ann aour touez al ludu;
Hag ann argant touez ann drez, pa 'm euz kavet ann tu:

Me oar mont da giez du, pe da vran, p'am euz c'hoant;
Pe da botrik ar skod-tan, pe da aerouant;

Me oar eur zon hag a lak ann nenvou da frailla
Hag ar mor braz da zridal, hag ann douar da grena.

Me oar me kement tra zo er bed-man da c'houiet,
Kement tra zo bet gwechall, kement zo da zonet.

Kentan louzou am euz gret gant ma dousik kloarek,
Oe gand lagad klei eur vran ha kalon eunn tousek;

Ha gand had ar raden glaz, don ar puns kant goured,
Ha grouiou ann aour-ieoten war ar prad dastumet;

Dastumet, diskabel-kaer, d'ar goulou-de a-grenn,
Nemed ma iviz gen-in, hag ouspenn dierc'henn.

Kenta 'toliz ma louzou da c'hout hag hen oa mad,
A oe e-kreiz park segal ann otrou ann Abad,

Deuz triouec'h bigouad segal doa hadet ann Abad,
N'en deuz bet da zastumi nemed diou guichennad.

Me 'm euz eunn arc'hig argant er ger e ti ma zad,
Ann hini hen digorfe en defe kalonad!

Hag enn han teir aer-wiber o c'houi ui aerouant,
Mar deu ma aerouant da vad, neuze vo nec'hamant.

Mar deu ma aerouant da vad, a vo gwall nec'hamant;
Seiz leo war-dro ac'hannen e teui da deureul tan.

Ne ket gand kik klujiri na kik keveleged,
Gand goad sakr ar re zinao eo int gan-in maget.

Ar c'hentan em boa lahet oa ebarz ar vered,
O vonet d'ar vadian, hag ar beleg gwisket.

Tre ma oa oet d'ar c'hroaz-hent, e tennez ma boutou,
Hag a iez d'he ziveia, didrouz, war ma lerou.

Mar jommann war ann douar, ha gen-in ma Goulaou,
Mar jommomp war ar bed-man, c'hoaz eur bloavez pe zaou;

C'hoaz eunn daou pe dri bloavez, ma dous ha me hon daou,
Ni a lakai ar bed-man da drei war he c'hinaou. —

— Evesait mad, Loizaik, evesait d'hoc'h ene,
Mar d-eo ar bed-man d'hoc'h-hu, da Zoue egile. —

Appendix 2.1.2. An Aour Iaten

Collected by Théodore Hersart de la Villemarqué

Source: Laurent, Donatien. *Aux Sources du Barzaz-Breiz: La mémoire d'un peuple*. Douarnenez: ArMen, 1989. p. 147.

pe oan me oet dan naonet da ziski ar galek,
ne ouien sur va doue nemet ar brezonek

mes breman me oar galek ha skriou ive a allen
skoulmou an akuloten ha c'hreiz hag ann daou ben

ha miret deus ann belek a lar he offeren

me oar lar ann offeren kenkoulz a

.

me oan me oet dan naonet me a oa souezet
e gwelet ar sorcerien hag ar sorcerezet

e tisken e breiziel da lakat kir ann ed.

Keton biskoaz emezi boa me ma louzou groet
oa gant kant kalon a morbran ha k. . . .

gant gouriou ann naour iaten had raden dastumet

Kenton biskoaz emezi oan prouhet me louzou
war eur z() zillien oa gr() o c'has me zaout er chaou

deus triwech bigoat segal, en doa adet ma zad
nen deus ket bet da zastum nemet diou kuchennat

me meus eur bouestik et ti me sat
ann neb ad

a zo barz ter aer vibren o chori ar serpant
me tei ma serpant da vat evel me ma tallet

na ket kant kik klucheri a vez() maget
na gant kik kevelet
nemet gant gwad a kik an innocentet

mar vevin ba met en bet choas eur blaik pe zaou

bizen laken

mem bije laket ar mab evit lazo he dad
sonjet kristenien doue drezé so hon ingrad

mem bije evit lazo he man
sonjet kristenien doue drezo so hon estlam.

Variants:

diskabel kaer dré () an de a gren
Dastumet, tre zav an eol ha zav an goulou de kren
ganimé nemet me ivis gan () hag ouspen dieirien
ha pe oan kouet war nezi
pe m'ba keset var nezi en hu () e oa kouet
me mon da goue neur kousk,
ha da ziskou an gregach en eul laer an nous

ar chenta em boa lazet e oa bar ar porchet
prest da receo ar vadiant vize ha beleg guisket
hag e voant kasset neuze ractal dar groesenchou
ha pe oant lazet ghené me tene me boutou
ha me ié é didrous mat, d'ho klask e crosenchou,
evit ober diganthé ober va divinou
ha trema oa bet kasset, es() er chozenchou
me iez didrous mat de clask

Appendix 2.1.3. Abelard

Collected by Théodore Hersart de la Villemarqué

Source: Laurent, Donatien. *Aux Sources du Barzaz-Breiz: La mémoire d'un peuple*. Douarnenez: ArMen, 1989. p. 244.

enn amzer a oan em gherik em gherik timezat
ne houien me ma doué nemet ar brezonek
— Diboas an oad da zek bla meus (kuitet) ti me zat
pe oan me oet da baris —

Appendix 2.1.4. Janedik Ar Zorseres (gwes kenta)

Published by François-Marie Luzel

Source: Luzel, François-Marie. *Gwerzioù Breiz-Izel*. Vol. 1. Lorient: É. Corffmat, 1868. pp. 50-53.

I

— Eomp-ni hon daou Janedik, d'ar pardon d'ar Ieodet,
Pell-braz dimeuz a amzer 'm euz prometet monet. —

Janedik a lavare, p'oa drem-dost d'ar Ieodet:
— Aman a-vad, eme-z-hi, 'zo 'r parkad kaer a ed!

Aman a-vad, eme-z-hi, 'zo 'r parkad kaer 'segall,
Hag a-benn ma retornfomp, na vo nemet pigall;

A zo bet et d'hen hada tric'houec'h poezellad had,
'Benn vo daro da droc'ha, na vo met ur rennad!

'Benn vo daro da droc'ha, na vo met ur rennad,
Hag a-benn ma vo gwentet, n' vo ket ur skudellad! —

— Na gwallet d'in ledander ul linsel-wenterez,
Ha me a welo neuze ha c'hui 'zo zorserez. —

— Salv-ho-kraz, ma zad, 'me-z-hi, n'hallan ket hen ober,
Dont rafenn da rouinan ar vro-ma en antier. —

— Eomp-ni d'ar ger, Janedik, eomp-di d'ar ger hon daou,
Ha laromp a wir galon adieu d'ar pardonieu. —

II

Ann ozac'h Iann a lare bars ar ger, d'he bried:
— Ni a meump maget ur verc'h a oar gwalla ann ed;

Me ia d'hi rekomandi d'ar prokuror iskar (fiscal?). —
Ann ozac'h Iann a lare d'ar prokuror iskar:

— Ni a meump ganet ur verc'h a oar gwalla ann ed,
Grit ho posubl 'n hi andret, wit omp-ni hon euz gret. —

— Digasset ho merc'h ama, ma vo interrojet,
Barnet dirag 'nn tribunal, mar deuz-hi meritet. —

III

— Laret-c'hui d'in, Janedik, brema pa 'z oc'h barnet,
Penaos 'c'h euz diasket 'r sekret ewit gwalla ann ed? —

— Gant ur mesaër denved a oa en ti ma zad,
Ma c'hasse bepnos gant-han da welet ar zabad,

Lec'h ma vije 'r zorserienn hag ar zorserezed;
Hag a diskas d'in 'r sekret ewit gwalla ann ed.

Pa oa arruet hennes ebars en ti ma zad,
Na ouienn tra en douar nemet ma chapelad:

Brema me oar al latin, me oar skriva ha lenn,
Hag ampich ar belek d' laret ann oferenn;

Ampich 'r belek da laret, d'ar zul, he ofern-bred,
Ha konsakri ann hosti, mar ve d'in permetet! —

— Laret-c'hui d'in, Janedik, brema pa 'z oc'h barnet,
Petra 'zo red da gavet ewit gwalla ann ed? —

— Red' kaout kalon un tousek, lagad-kleiz ur mal-bran,
Ann had dimeuz ar radenn, en noz tantad Sant-Iann.

Gant ur plat arc'hant am boa 'tastummenn leiz ma bôz,
Oh! ia, etre unnek-heur hag ann taol anter-noz.

Ul louzouenn all 'zo c'hoas, hounnes na hanwinn ket,
Hogenn a-nez hi c'havet, n'ho deuz vertuz er-bed.

Me 'm euz ur c'houfik-bahut er ger, en ti ma zad,
Hag ann nep hen digoro hen defo kalonnad!

Ann hini hen digoro renko kaout kalon frank,
'Zo en-han ter aer-wiber o c'horu ur serpent.

Mar deu ma zer aerik da ober bloavez-mad,
A renkont beza bewet gant ur boued dilikad;

A renkont beza bewet gant ur boued dilikad,

Ma eo gant kik glujar ha kik kefeleged;

Hag iwe ar goad roïal euz ann inosanted,
Pa 'z aint wit beza badet, da doull dor ar porchet;

Ha kent ma vankfenn-me d'ober d'ez-he er-vad,
Me deufe da rei d'ez-he goad ma mamm ha ma zad! —

— Laret-c'hui d'in, Janedik, brema pa'z oc'h barnet,
Petra 'zo red da ober wit na brodufont ket? —

— Lakad 'nn ez-he 'n un dachenn, ober tan 'n dro d'ez-he,
Ann douar a zigoro, a lonko ann ez-he!

Met me ho ped, mar gret tan, gret ma vezo tan-frank,
Mar deu hini da achap, 'vo dewet 'r firmamant!

Na mar vijenn-me bet c'hoas ur bloavez en buhe,
Am bije laket ar bed da vont war he goste! —

Appendix 2.1.5. Janedik Ar Zorseres (eïl gwes)

Published by François-Marie Luzel

Source: Luzel, François-Marie. *Gwerzïon Breiz-Izel*. Vol. 1. Lorient: É. Corfmat, 1868. pp. 54-57.

.....
.....

— Pa is kenta da Baris, da ziskin ar Gallek,
Me na ouienn, ma Doue, nemet ma chapelet.

Met brema me 'm euz disket, me oar skiva ha lenn,
Ha kerkouls hag ar belek laret ann oferenn;

Me oar kana 'nn abostol, bars ann oferenn-bred,
Ha konsakri ann hosti, mar ve d'in permetet. —

— Laret-c'hui d'in, merc'h iaouank, gant piou oc'h euz disket,
Oc'h euz disket ar sekret ewit gwalla ann ed? —

— Gant ur c'hloarek iaouank a oa en ti ma zad,
Ma c'hasse bep-noz gant-han wit gwelet ar zabad;

Ma c'hasse bep-noz gant-han wit gwelet ar zabad,
Hag am euz disket ann drouk, e-lec'h diski ar vad:

Ha pa arruenn eno, na glewenn mann er-bed,
Nemet kaoz ar zorserienn hag ar zorseresed;

Nemet kaoz ar zorserienn hag ar zorseresed,
Hag e-lec'h diskin ar vad, ann drouk am euz disket! —

— Laret-c'hui d'in, merc'h iaouank, gant piou oc'h euz disket,
Oc'h euz disket ar sekret ewit gwalla ann ed?

War-hed seiz lew diouzoc'h n'euz dioanet tamm ed,
Ha bugel-bihan ganet, hini n'euz badezet?
.....

— Laret-c'hui d'in merc'h iaouank, petra 'zo red kavet,
Petra 'zo red da gavet, ewit gwalla ann ed? —

— Na lagad-kleiz ul mal-bran ha kalon un tousek,

Ann had dimeuz ar radenn, noz goel-Iann dastumet.

Kenta lakiz ma louzou, da c'houde ha hi oa mad,
Oa 'n ur mezoed segall hen doa hadet ma zad;

Oa 'n ur mezoed segall hen doa hadet ma zad,
Hag a oa et d'hen hada tric'houec'h hanter poellad;

Hag a oa et d'hen hada tric'houec'h hanter poellad,
Met na euz ket bet en-han tric'houec'h skudellad-vad.

Me 'm euz ur c'houfik-bahut ebars en ti ma zad,
Ar c'henta hen digoro, hen defo kalonad!

'Zo en-han ter aer-wiber o c'horu ur serpant,
Hag a dewo ar bed-ma en holl antieramant.

Mar deu ma loenidigou da ober bloavezh-mad,
A renkont beza bewet gant ur boued dilikad:

Na vo ket gant leas-peutrin eo a vezoint bewet,
Ma vo gant ar goad roial euz ann inosanted;

Ma vo gant ar goad roial euz ann inosanted,
Kent wit monet d'ann iliz da veza badezet.

Me ouie laza 'r bugel en kornik ar porchet,
Prest da resev badeziant, hag ar belek gwisket. —

— Arsa eta, Janedik, brema pa 'z oc'h barnet,
Petra 'zo dleet d'ober wit na brodufont ket? —

— Ho lakad en kreiz ur park, ober tan 'n dro d'ez-he,
Ann douar a zigoro, a lonko ann ez-he!

Ha me ho ped, mar gret tan, gret ma vezo tan frank,
Mar achap hini 'nn ez-he, 'tewo ar firmamant!

Mar vijenn-me bet chomet c'hoas ur bloas en buhe,
Am bije lakad ar bed da vont war he goste! —

Appendix 2.1.6. Ar sorcerez

Collected by Jean-Marie Penguern

Source: Penguern, Jean-Marie. *Dastumad Penvern*. Rennes: Dastum, 1983. pp. 93-94.

me ne moa ket hoas pemzek bloa
ag a woar desket mad
a ouie kana ar prefaç
Kouls ag an ofern bred.

Konsacri an ostiou d'in ma vije permetet

— Liverit tu dime plachik gant piou o c'heus desket
ar secrejo pere ouzoc'h pere a leveret.

— Gant eur sklolaer yaouank er gher en ti va zad
em kasse gantan beb nos da klevet ar sabad.

Kenta ma klevis ar sabad me a voa souezet
ho klevet ar sorcerien ag ar sorcerezet
ho c'helvel dre o louzou evit Goali an ed.

Kenta ma aprouvis ma louçou
da welet ag hi woa mad

e woa var eur goarimad segal
er ger en ti va zad.

nag a woa ed de adda na trivarc'h boezeled
ha ne voa ked bed a nezan trivac'h skudellad mad.

me meus eur c'houffrik bahut er gher en ti ma zad
Piou benag en digoro en devo kalonnad.

a zo enan teïr aër viber o viri eur serpent
ag e devoro ar vro man tout en antieramant

Mar deus va teïr aër viber da ober eur blaves mad
e rankin bea kunduet gant boued dilikat.

nen deo ket gant kig klujar na gant kig kevelek
gant goad ar vugale munut, kig an innoçantet,

Kassit va c'houffrik bahut en eur fark a tri korn
Lakit an tan den dewi a pelaït diontan.

Me ia breman dar maro pa em boa miritet
Balamour dam sorcerezjou pere am moa desket.

Appendix 2.1.7. Sorceres

Collected by Jean-Marie Penguern

Source: Penguern, Jean-Marie. *Dastumad Penvern*. Rennes: Dastum, 1983. pp. 125-126.

Sellaouit hag e kleffot, hag he kleffot kana
eur wers a zo kompozet a neve vid ar bla.

zo gred da Katellik ar Gall peni deus gred
sorcerez evid laza an ed.

Katellik ar Gall deom leveret
Peni eo al louzou evid laza an ed?

Kenta ma haprouvis va louzou
Da c'houde ag en a voa mad.

e voa en eur warimad segal
hag en devoa va zad

a voa adet heni trivarc'h boëzellad ad
ne neus ked bed anezi daouzek skudellad vad.

— Ar ça ta Kattelik dem-ni a leveret
gant piou o c'heus disket?
ar secretejou a c'houzorc'h evid laza an ed?

— na gand eur c'hloarek iaouank a voa e ti va zad
am c'hasse bem-nos bem-nos na gantan d'ar Sabad.

Ar ça ta Katellik dem-ni a leveret
Pere e ta al louzou evid laza an ed?

— gant lagad klei eul malfran a kalon an toussek
ar voeden radenen noz goel ian dastumet

Bed dindan an oter c'houel epad an offern bred
ar re ze eo va louzou evid laza an ed.

Me meus eur c'houffrik peun e bars e ti va zad
Ag an ini en tigor en devezo kallonad.

A zo henan teir aer viber e gori eur serpent
kapab da leski ar bed man perpetuellamant.

na mar deu dezo gouri ag ober blavez mad
he renko va zeir aer beza konduet mad

nan deo ket gant kig klujar na gant kig kevellek
gant ar bugale vunut a ben ma vezint badezet

— Ar ça ta Katellik ar Gall, c'houi o c'heus meritet
Ar maro sertenamant pa distrujit an ed.

eun ivis rousinet a voa dei gouisket
eun torch koar ellumet
evid e lakad dar maro pa e dewa meritet.

Ma rache reflexion var nezi an oll plac'het
Da ziwel sertenamant doc'h vissou fal ar bed.

Appendix 2.1.8. Son Janedic

Collected by Jean-Marie Penguern

Source: Penguern, Jean-Marie. *Gwerin 9*. Lesneven: Hor Yezh, 1997. pp. 148-149.

demp ni eta janedic dar pardon dar Yeodet
pel so deus a amser moamp promettet monet
janedic a levere dre en hent dre ma he
cetu aze emezi eur pariat caer a-hed
na na vezo quet ennan guir trivoac'h scudellat
neun bignat voar ar c'hleus heun disquen an toufles
memeus goallet an tut man hep cavout nep true
leret-tu din janedic, penoc'h ken caer disquet
piou a neus hu ta desket da dont da voallin an hed?
— gant eur messaer denvet e voa en ti ma zad
em c'hasse gantan beb nos da glevet er sabat
allas ma voa yaouankik hag a meus dalchet mat
— leret tu din, janedic breman pa noch barnet
pera veret da gat evit goallan an hed?
— daoulagad eur malbran, calonec eun touzec
en had dimeus ar raden en nos goel jan gouret
nep neus choant do chavet ho gouret an nos se
rac an nos a greunont hag a tisqueunont ae
hag a {cont} va {ayal} an anter brassan ne
pa c'his quantan da Baris da disquis er gallec
me ne ouien sort an doue mest sant ma chapelet
breman ma voar canan n'abostol me voar scrivan ha lenn
me ampichfe eur belek da leret he oferen
me voar moughan eur crouadur en conjuet er porchet
prest da recew badeiant hag er belek guisquet
me meus eur chouf bahut er gher en ti ma zad
hag e nep hen digorfe a neve calonat
a nep en digoro a nevo kalon franc
me meus ennan ter aer wiber a chori eur sarpant
hag ha tol tan drouk teir leo er firmamant
{quent} a vankfe dam loenedigou vean bevet mad
na vanq de na kik glujar nag ive kik keveleg
na ve deus deur er goad royal goat an inosantet

quen a vit na vanque dam loenedagou bean bevet mad
me rafe de da dibri kalon ma mam ha ma zad

me voël eur garg squillou vont gant er ru antraon
wen div heur antier aman ma vo ludu ha glaou

Appendix 2.1.9. Merc'h ar Baron

Collected by Le Goff

Source: Pérennès, Henri. "Chansons populaires de la Basse-Bretagne". *Annales de Bretagne* vol. 45 (1938). pp. 40-71, 218-223.

Me a zo merc'h d'eur baron devez a Vreiz-Izel
Hag araok ar Brinsez vras ranket em eus tec'hel;

Ha ranket em eus tec'hel evit monet da Bariz
Evit deski sekrejou misteriou an Ofis.

Ha da genta pa oan êt da zeski ar galleg
Ne ouien, sur, ma Doue, nemet ar brezoneg.

Met breman, dre c'hras Doue, me 'oar skriva ha lenn,
Ha miret ouz ar beleg da lar't e oferenn.

Ha miret ouz ar beleg da lar't e ofer'nn-bred,
Da sakri ar bara-kan ma ve d'in aotreet.

— O! leret d'in-me plac'hig, plac'hig a driouec'h vloa,
Digant piou oc'h eus desket eur sorserez ker mat?

Digant eur c'hloareg yaouank, er ger e ti ma zad,
P'hini ma c'hase gantan d'an dans ha d'an ebat.

P'hini ma c'hase gantan d'an dans, d'an ebatou
Lec'h ma veze implijet ar sorserez louzou.

Kenta 'm oa e implijet da wel't hag hen oa mad
'Oa 'barz eur parkad segal, bet hadet gant ma zad.

P'hini oa êt d'e hada triouec'h boezellad had
Ha pa oar êt d'e zastum n'oa ket triouec'h skuellad.

— Oh! leret d'in-me plac'hig, plac'hig a driouec'h vloa,
Gant petra'ta oc'h eus graet eur sorserez ker mat?

Gant lagad klei eur malvran ha kalon eun touseg,
Hag ar beg eus ar radenn da ouel Yann dastumet.

Me 'm eus eur voestig vihan, er ger e ti ma zad,
Hag an neb he digorfe en defe kalonad.

Eno 'zo teir aër-wiber, o c'hori eur serpent,
Hag evit devi ar bed perpetuellamant.

Ma 'm bije bet da veva eur bloavezig bennak
'M bije roet d'ê da zibri kalon ma mamm, ma zad.

Me am eus eur bern balan, er ger e penn ma zi,
Me lakay ma boest vihan en he greiz da zeви.

Ma 'm bije bet da veva eur bloavezig pe zaou
'M bije lakêt Breiz-Izel da droi war he ginaou.

Me 'm bije laket ker tano, kerc'h, segal had id-du,
Evel an aour melen e forniet d'al ludu.

Appendix 2.2. Ar Plac'h Dimezet Gand Satan

Appendix 2.2.1. Ar Plac'h Dimezet gand Satan

Published by Théodore Hersart de la Villemarqué

Source: Hersart de la Villemarqué, Théodore. *Barzaz Breiz* = *Chants populaires de la Bretagne*, 8th rep. Paris: Didier, 1883. pp. 157-161.

I

Selaout holl, bihan ha braz,
Ar barz-baleer eur wech c'hoaz.

Eur werz nevez am euz savet;
Koz ha iaouank, deuit d'he c'hlevet.

Ann dra-ma pa oa digouezet,
N'oann ked daouzek vloaz achuet.

N'oann ked daouzek vloaz achuet,
Ha setu m'em zri-ugentvet.

Deui d'am selaou neb a garo,
Da zelaou ar baleer-bro;

Deuit d'am selaou holl, mar keret;
Benn eur pennad na reot ket.

II

Teir noz n'am eus kousket banne,
Nag henoze na rinn adarre,

Gant c'houibanou ann aer-wiber,
O c'houibanat war lez ar ster.

Hi lavare dre he c'houiban:
— Setu gan-i-me c'hoazh unan!

Euz ar ger-ma 'm euz bet pevar,
Heb charrat nikun d'an douar. —

Daou zen iaouank a ziaze
A oe dimezet ann deiz-ze.

Triouec'h kemener a oe bet
D'aoza d'ezhi sae he eured;

D'aoza d'ezhi sae he eured,
Oa enn hi daouzek a stered;

Oa enn hi daouzek a stered,
Hag ann heol hag al loar pintet,

Triouec'h kemener d'he gwiska,
Nemet Satan d'he diwiska.

Ann oferen pa oe kanet,
E tistroaz barz ar vered.

O vonet tre barz ann iliz,
Oa ker kaer evel bleun al liz;

O tont endro trezek dor-zal,
Oa ker vaen hag eunn durzunal.

Setu eunn aotrou braz fichet,
Hag hen penn-da-benn houarneset;

Hag eunn tok-houarn aour war he benn,
Hag eur paltok ruz war he gein;

He lagad evel luc'heden,
Dindan he dok-houarn enn he benn;

Ha gant-han eunn inkane saoz;
Hag hen ken du evel ann noz,

Eunn inkane, tan diouc'h he dreid,
Evel hini 'nn aotrou marc'hek,

Ann aotrou Piar Izel-vet,
(Bezef gand Doue pardonet!)

— Taolit d'i-me ar plac'h nevez,
Da gas da welet d'am zud-me;

Da gas d'am zud-me da welet;
Bremaig e vinn distroet —

Kaer oa gortoz ar plac'h nevez,
Ar plac'h nevez na zistroes

III

Pa oa sonerien an ebad
O tont d'ar gear noz-divezad,

Setu ann aotrou braz fichet:
— C'hoari gaer er fest a zo bet?

— C'hoari gaer awalc'h enn eured,
Med ar plac'h nevez zo kollet.

— Ar plac'h nevez a zo kollet?
Ha c'hoant vez gan-e-hoc'h d'he gwelet?

— C'hoant a-walc'h hor bo d'he gwelet,
Ma n'hor bo poan na droug e-bed. —

Oa ked ho c'homz peurlavaret
Pa oant gand ann aod digouezet;

Ha gand eul lestr digemeret,
Hag ar mor braz a oa treuzet,

Lenn ann Anken hag ann Eskern,
Ha pa oant e toull ann ifern.

— Setu sonerien hoc'h eured
A zo deut evid ho kwelet.

Petra rofac'h d'ann dud vad-ma,
A zo deut d'ho kwelet ama?

— Dalit seizenen va eured,
Kasit-hi gan-e-hoc'h, mar keret;

Dalit bizou aour va eured,
Kasit-han d'ar gear d'am fried.

Livirit d'ezhan: « Na oel ket,
N'e deuz na c'hoant na droug e-bet. »

Kasit-han d'ar gear d'am fried,
A zo intanv deiz he eured.

Me zo enn eur gador aouret,
O veski mez d'ar re zaonet. —

IV

N'ho doa ket graet eur gammed grenn,
Pa glevzont tenn' eur iouc'hadenn:

— Mil malloz d'e-hoc'h-hu, sonerien!—
Puns ann ifern oa war he fenn.

Mar defe he seizen miret
Kouls ha bizou aour he eured,

Kouls hag he bizou benniget,
Puns ann ifern oa kounfontet.

V

Ann neb a ra tri dimizi,
Tri dimizi hep eureuji,
Ez a d'ann ifern da leski,

Ken distak diouz ar baradoz,
Ha ma'nn delien zeac'h diouz ar roz;

Ker kuit diouz baradoz Doue,
Ha ma'r skour trouc'het diouz ar gwe

Appendix 2.2.2. Zon aer wiber

Collected by Théodore Hersart de la Villemarqué

Source: Laurent, Donatien. *Aux Sources du Barzaz-Breiz: La mémoire d'un peuple*. Douarnenez: ArMen, 1989. pp. 155–157.

ter nozaz zo meus kousket bane
nag enoaz na rin adarré (bis).

E klevet trous an aer wiber
e wibana war ar rivier.

Hag a lare dre hi wiban
ne faut dan mezé met unan

Daou zen yaouank a galité
jes da eureuji an deiz zé (xxxx)

Pe oa achuet an euret
oant distroet bars ar veret

Dont enon eun autrou bras fichet

tont da choulen ar plach nevè

prestet dimené ho plach nevé
da gass dam itron da welet

Vo ket pell zigoue dar veret

tec'h oa gortos ar plach nevé,
ar plach ne mui na zigoé,

pe oa sonerien an euret
o vont dan gher demeus ar fest

e renkontrent war an hent hed
eun otrou ha hen brao fichet

heurvât sonerien ann euret
c'hoari gaer zo bet bars ar fest

C'hoari wach zo bet en euret
met ar plach né a zo kollet

Deut ghenin zonerien ann euret
mo chasso ghenin d'he gwelet

mar nem bezomp droug ebet
ni zo kontan wach de gwelet

petra rit dom sonerien an euret
vit an poen o vont d'he gullet

ui zo deut dan ifern dem gullet

ra din da bijou ha da zeien
evit kass dar gher d'ho ferc'hien

he bijou mar dor i bes faket tenet
puncs an ifern ma confrontet (x)

nani ra daou tri dimézi
heb eureuji na interi
ha hia dan ifern da leski

Chiouaz ema zo ar pevarvé
heb charo nikun dan douar.

[Variant written in pencil:]

gant an ...
lar n () s dimezet met eunan

nani ra daou tri dimezi
zo ken distag demeus doué
Dema del demeus ar gué

zo ken distag dar Barados
a ma dell () deus ar ros

chisiouas ()epret hi () bevar
heb charro () dan douar

... benighet
allas siouas emon kollet

triwech kimmer oa klasket
dosa dar plach habit euret
ha choaz ne oa fors rubanet

[Variant written in pencil:]

Kasset hi dan gher
war an hent bras en em lakas

enn denjentil a recontras
Digentil dim a leveret

ha c'houi refe din habit euret
hag ee caffin brao pe me guisket

— ia me a breto habit euret
hag a caffin brao pe me guisket

pe ao tonet e() ilis
e oa () fourdelis

pa zistroaz () da noter

pe oan tonet mes an ilis
en digentil a recontris

— lavar din kondueret
ha c'houi pretfe din ho plar euret

— pre () let
et () an noblans da welet

— prestet plac'h nevé
me rento () adaré

kaer en da () os ar
ne oa.

[Prologue written in the margin:]

Chilaouet holl bihan ha braz
ar baleer bro eur vech choaz

Eur zonik neve meus savet
kous ha iaouank dudi clevet

an tr() na pe oa digoet
ket
oan daouzek bla achuet

oan ket daouzek bla achuet
ha mebran on triughent tremenet;
hag on pevarughent tremenet

me chilaouo neb a garo
chilaou ar baleer bro;

Ben eur pennad mui na reio,
rag ben a neuzé vin maro;

[Variant written in the margin:]

dont eno 'nn autrou bras fichet

hen du pendaben harneset
(gant hen nhe heul eur p() kos)
(hag hen ken du evel dan nos)
hag hen harneset pendaben
hag eur vantel ru war he ken
ha gant hen an inkane red
vel dan ini nautrou marek
eun incane tan deus e dreit
vel dan ini naoutrou marek
nautrou person an izelvet
bezet gant doue pardonet

[*Variant:*]

oa ket he comps peurlavaret
var les an ot a oa digwet,

ha war eul lestrig, oa pignet,
hag ar mor bras a oa treujet

ha stang an anken hag an ()et
hag en ifern a oa digwet
darvet

Appendix 2.2.3. (Me meus gret daou tri dizemi)

Collected by Théodore Hersart de la Villemarqué

Source: Laurent, Donatien. Aux Sources du Barzaz-Breiz: La mémoire d'un peuple. Douarnenez: ArMen, 1989.
pp. 158–159.

Me meus gret daou tri dizemi
me mam a zo bet kiriek din

Ken distak e deuz ar barados,
ema 'n deillou demeuz ar ros,

Ken distak barados doué
ema brankou sec'h deuz ar gwé

pa zistroes deuz an oter
wa ken du vel da lucifer

pa zistroas deuz an nour sal
oa ken kaer evel dar gristal

hi tat he mamm dal me velas
war he zaoulin en em strinkas

— refe doue ar gras din
defe ma mec'h da liou nefa ken (x)

n'offern neve pe oa achuet
Brouskou voulous oa preparet

Brouiou voules vit e goulén
ha lucifer vit e disken

pe oa digouet tal pr()ret
hi recontras an drouk speret

tollet di eur plachik neve
ha mi chasso doch dangher é

heurvât . . .

trapet so bet er banket.
— trapek oalch zo bet . . .
met . . . ar pl. . . . kollet

ar plach neve a zo kollet
ni a ve kontant d'he guelet

— heurvât doch soner euret
ui zo deut dan ifern d am gwelet

Dellet hu bijou ma euret
kasset hen dam kenta priet

laret dean ne wela ket
me zo aman meus droug ebet

Deiz ma euret eil

Davancher... divean

nifent ket gret eur paskren
hi chlevas ober eur griaden

peus an ifern oa war hi fen (x)

mallos dar sonerien ma euret
zo deut dan ifern dam gwelet

me meus eur gador allaouret
mesko koter dar re zaonet
lech ne meus choant ne droug ebet.

*Après avoir donné les bardes bénies, elle tomba
au pouvoir du diable
toutes les bardes sont bénies.*

[Variant written in pencil:]

Bonjour zonerien an euret
ha chervat zo bet nn ho panket

— chervat av() a zo bet
met ar plach ne a zo kollet

— lavar din soner an euret
ha chui ve contant dhe guelet

— kontant wa() a v() dhe guelet
mar p() poan na droug ebet
mar n'emp

— na po na poan
() de guelet

— Bonjour sonerien an euret
pa moch deit dan ifern dam guellet

— a lavaré dei an holl diaoullet
— petra () da zon da () ret

— petra ret . . .
vit dont dan ifern () k()llet

— Bizou () euret
() (x)

Laret dean na z() dei he euret (xx)

— allare dei an holl ziaulet
me peus () ha dour benighet
ne po na poan na droug ebet

(xx) laret mont n'
()ont

Appendix 2.2.4. Janet Ar Wern (gwes kenta)

Published by François-Marie Luzel

Source: Luzel, François-Marie. *Gwerzjoù Breiz-Izel*. Vol. 1. Lorient: É. Corffmat, 1868. pp. 26-33.

I

— Ter noz zo n' 'm euz kousket banne,
Henoz na rinn ket adarre;

Nag o klewet ann aer-wiber
'C'huibanad war vordik ar ster.

Ha ma lare dre hi c'huiban:
Na euz dimi nemet unan:

'Nn hini dime gant he c'hrad-vad,
Hag a dispenn dre wall-bennad,

Hag a dispenn dre wall-bennad,
Euz ann diaoul a ra kontrad:

A ve euz Doue distag krenn,
Evel ar brank euz ar wezenn;

Euz ar baradoz distag net,
Evel euz ar blouzenn ann ed! —

II

Pa 'z ie Janet 'r Wern da Wengamp,
Da disanzao ar zakramant,

Da zansal euz ur groaz arc'hant,
Hi' rankontr 'n denjentil iaouank:

Hi' rankontr 'n denjentil iaouank,
Med 'oa gwisket 'vel pañsant;

Un denjentil, oa brao awalc'h,
Med 'oa he dreid 'vel treid ur marc'h.

— Janet ar Wern, d'in me laret,
D' bed den iaouank 'c'h euz prometet? —

— Da dric'houec'h am euz prometet,
Med euz hini n'am euz dalc'het;

Med euz hini n'am euz dalc'het,
C'hui vo ma hini, mar karet.

Tric'houec'h kemener 'zo em zi,
Oc'h ober dillad newez d'in;

Oc'h ober dillad newez d'in,
Da vont warc'hoas da dimizi. —

Pa oa ann dillad newez gret,
Da Janet 'r Wern na blijent ket;

Da Janet 'r Wern na blijent ket,
Eudann hi zreid ho deuz mac'het.

III

Ann Aerouant a lavare,
'N ti ar Wern koz pa arrue:

— Roët d'in skabel d'azeza,
Mar ben-me mab-kaër en ti-ma. —

— Mab-kaër en ti-ma n' vefet ket,
Gwennou-daoulagad n'oc'h euz ket;

Gwennou-daoulagad n'oc'h euz ket,
Ho treid a zo 'vel re kezek! —

— Drouk ha mad gant neb a garo,
Mab-kaër en ti-ma me vezo;

Pa ve ma zreid 'vel re ur c'hi,
Ho merc'h Janedik a zo d'in. —

— Ma merc'h Janedik n'ho po ket,
Rag ma c'honje vo red kavet. —

— Gant ul lom goad ma biz-bihan,
'M euz gret kontrad oud-hi d' viken! —

IV

Kriz 'vije 'r galon na oelje,
'N ti ar Wern koz neb a vije,

'Welet 'n dut a eured douget,
Hag ar wroeg iaouank o kerzet;

Hag ar wroeg iaouank o kerzet,
Hi inkane n' hi gouzanv ket.

— Taolet-hi d'in war lost ma marc'h,
He-man hi gouzanvo a-walc'h! —

Ac'hane neuze n'oe gwelet,
Ken oe oc'h antren er vered.

Dre ma tostaë d'ann iliz,
Hi oa ken kaër ha fourdeliz;

Pa dro hi bizaj d'ann aoter,
Hi 'zo ken kaër hag ar bleun per;

Pa droë hi c'hein d'ann aoter,
Ez ie du evel Lusufer!

'N aotro ar person a lare
Da Janet 'r Wern eno neuze:

— Janet ar Wern, d'in-me laret,
Ur pec'het bennag 'c'h euz nac'het? —

— Me n'am euz nac'het nep pec'het,
Med seiz promese am euz gret;

Ia, seiz promese, siouaz d'in,
Heb eureuji da neb-hini! —

— Janet ar Wern, d'in-me laret,
Da biou kenta 'c'h euz prometet? —

— D'Ervoanik 'r Bail, a Vourbriek,
Oa 'r c'hentan am euz prometet. —

Ar belek, vel m'hen euz klewet,
War he inkane zo pignet;

War he inkane eo pignet,
Ha da Vourbriek ez eo et.

— Ervoanik 'r Bail, d'in-me laret,
C'hui zelvrf e 'n ine daonet;

C'hui zelvrf e 'n ine daonet,
O komer Janet 'r Wern da bried? —

— Me iel' ganac'h lec'h ma karfet,
Hag a raï 'vel ma lavarfet;

Hag a raï 'vel ma lavarfet,
'Komer Janet 'r Wern da bried. —

Janet ar Wern a lavare
Penaos ann den-ze n'anvee;

Penaos ann den-ze n'anvee,
Oa gant-hi ann neb a gare.

.....
.....

— Lammet m' mantel diwar ma chouk,
Ma loski' ra vel ann tan-broud!

Lammet d'in iwe ma zeinn,
Ma zeinn eured, ma gwalenn;

Ma zeinn eured, ma gwalenn,
Ma dewi reont 'vel tan 'n ifern! —

V

Ann aerouant a lavare
Euz sonerrienn 'n eured neuze:

— Sonerrienn 'n eured, d'in laret,
C'hoari-gaer 'zo bet er banket? —

— C'hoari-gaer 'r banket n'euz ket bet,

Janedik ar Wern 'zo kollet. —

— Sonerrienn 'n eured, d'in laret,
A c'hui c'hoantaë hi gwelet? —

— Ia 'walc'h, me c'houlenn hi gwelet,
Med gant n'am bezo drouk er-bed;

Med gant n'am bezo drouk er-bed,
Ha ma vinn er porchet rentet. —

Hag hen o kregi bars he benn,
Hen kass dreist ann tier huël.....

VI

En ifern pa 'z eo arruet,
Janet ar Wern hen euz gwelet;

Janet ar Wern hen euz gwelet,
'N ur gador ardant azezet;

'N ur gador ardant azezet,
Dira-z-hi 'r gaoter plom berwet!

Janet ar Wern a lavare
Da zoner ann eured neuze:

— Dalet ma chapelet bihan,
Ma losk aman evel ann tann!

Laret d'ann Nikolas, ma zad,
Eman en ifern he gontrad;

Laret da Janedik ar Wern,
Eman hi c'hador en Ifern!

Dalet ma chapelet eured.
Roët-han d'ann hini vo 'r porchet..... —

.....

Hi chapelet p'eo diskroget,
En puns ann ifern e fontet,

Hi o kriall: — Ah! iaou! allas!
Poaniou ann ifern a zo braz! —

Appendix 2.2.5. Janet Ar Wern (eil gwes)

Published by François-Marie Luzel

Source: Luzel, François-Marie. *Gwerzioù Breizh-Izel*. Vol. 1. Lorient: É. Corffmat, 1868. pp. 34-42.

I

— Ter noz zo takenn n' 'm euz kousket,
Ha fenoze arre na rinn ket,

Nag o klewet ann aer-Wiber,
O c'huibanad war lez ar ster.

Ha ma lare dre he c'huiban,
Na euz dimizi 'med unan;

'Nn hini zime da daou da dri
Ez ia d'ann ifern da leski;

'N hini zime da bemp, da c'houec'h,
A zo daonet perpetuel;

'N hini zime da c'houec'h, da seiz,
'Zo distag euz Doue a-grenn;

'Zo distag euz Doue a-grenn,
Evel ar brank euz ar Wezenn. —

II

Janet 'r Wern 'zo arre dimet:
Da choaz dillad eured eo et;

Et eo da choaz dillad eured,
Kaera er stal a vo kavet.

P'oa o retorn euz ker Gwengamp,
'Tigwezout gant-hi 'n den iaouank;

'Tigwezout gant-hi 'n mal iaouank,
War he viz ur walenn arc'hant.

Ar mal iaouank a c'houlenne,
Euz Janet 'r Wern p'hi rankontre:

— Janet ar Wern, d'in-me laret,
Pelec'h 'z oc'h bet, pe-lec'h ez et? —

— Me zo retorn euz ker Wengamp,
Bet o c'hoaz ma dillad eured;

Bet o c'hoaz ma dillad eured,
Kaera er stal a ve kavet. —

— M'ho dije a-c'hanon pedet,
Me 'iaje ive d'ho eured. —

— Mar na oc'h-c'hui ket bet pedet,
Deut warc'hoas 'r beure, hag vefet. —

Kement blijaz d'he fantazi,
M'hi c'honduaz beteg hi zi;

Beteg hi zi eo gant-hi et,
Allas! piou 'oa na ouie ket!

Ar mal iaouank a lavare
Eu hent d'ez-hi na dre ma 'z ee:

— Janet 'r Wern, m' vije d'ho reket,
Ni vije hon daou dimezet. —

— Na 'z eo ket ebars ann hentjou
A dle bout gret ann dimiziu;

Me 'zo beo ma mamm ha ma zad,
Vont war al lec'h, rok 'rinn kontrad. —

— Me, 'me-z-han 'zo beo m' re ive,

Med n' c'houlenann ket ho c'honje! —

.....

Ar mal iaouank a lavare,
Bars ar c'hroaz-hent pa 'z arrue:

— Janet ar Wern, kontant 'vefet.
A vezimb hon daou dimezet? —

— Na n'eo ket bars ar c'hroaz-hentjou
A dle bout gret ann dimiziu;

Me 'zo beo ma mamm ha ma zad,
A renkont bezan er c'hontrad. —

— Me a zo beo ma re iwe,
Med n' c'houlenann ket ho c'honje. —

.....

III

Ar mal iaouank a vonjoure
'N ti Janet ar Wern p'arrue:

— Roët d'in skabel d'azeza,
Serviedenn d'em dic'houeza;

Serviedenn d'em dic'houeza,
Mar be me mab-kaër ann ti-ma:

Me blijo d'ac'h, d'ho zantimant,
Me roïo d'ac'h aour hag arc'hant;

Me roïo d'ac'h aour hag arc'hant,
Ha mado ar pezh ho po c'hoant;

Me blijo d'ac'h ha d'ho speret,
Aour, arc'hant po 'r pezh a garrfet. —

— C'hui a vije a-walc'h d'am grad,
M'ho dije gwennou daoulagad:

Gwennou daoulagad n'oc'h euz ket,
Ho treid a zo vel treid kezek! —

IV

'N aotro 'r person a c'houlenne
Euz ar mal iaouank, p'hen gwele:

Petra 'glaskes war-dro ma zi?
Me na ian morse d'as hini. —

— Me a zo ac'hann a bell-bro,
Ma brendeur-all 'zo evel-t-on;

Me a zo ac'hann a bell-bro
Mab Lusufer eo ma hano. —

'N aotro 'r person a c'houlenne
Euz Janedik ar Wern neuze:

— Janet ar Wern, d'in-me laret
Petra pec'het oc'h euz nac'het. —

— N'am euz nac'het pec'het abed,
Med seiz dimizi am euz gret;

Me am euz gret seiz dimizi,
Heb ober kontrat euz hini:

Heb ober kontrat euz hini,
Med ar wes-ma, siouas a rinn!
.....

V

Pa 'z ia Janet 'traon gant 'n iliz
Ez ia ken kaer ha fourdeliz;

Pa 'z ia d'ann nec'h gant ann aoter,
Ez ia ken du ha Lusufer.
.....
.....

VI

.....
— Ur banket kaer a-walc'h 'zo bet,
Med ar vroeg eured 'zo kollet! —

Ann aër-wiber a lavare
Da zonerrienn 'n eured neuze:

— M'oc'h euz c'hoant gwelet Janet 'r Wern,
Deut ganin da fonz ann ifern! —

Ann aer Wiber a lavare
Da Janet ar Wern p'arrue:

— Petra d'zonerrien ho eured 'rofet?
Janet ar Wern, d'in-me laret. —

— Petra d'ez-he a ve roët
Med ma gwalenn, ma chapelet;

Ma gwalenn ha ma chapelet
Ewit kass d'ar ger, d'am fried?

Ewit kass d'ar ger d'am fried,
D'ar c'henta am boa prometet! —

Euz hi gwalenn, hi chapelet,
Ker-kent ma ez eo diskroget,

Ur griadenn a deuz leusket,
En punz ann ifern eo kouezet,

En em laret: — Ah! iaou! allas!
Poaniou ann ifern a zo braz! —

Appendix 2.2.6. Ann hini oa et da welet he vestrez d'ann ifern

Published by François-Marie Luzel

Source: Luzel, François-Marie. *Gwerzïon Breiz-Izel*. Vol. 1. Lorient: É. Corffmat, 1868. pp. 44-47.

Sklezrijenn euz ann ef breman a c'houlennan,
Euz ar Werc'hez-Vari, wit gallout espikan

Un exempl pitoiabl e-touez ann dut iaouank,
Da gement 'zo er bed ur mezelour patant.

Em darempredi rent en ho bugaleaj,
Dre ma teuent en oad, a rent c'hoas davantaj,

Em darempredi rent koulz en noz hag en de,
Hep diskouez nep doujanz euz a c'halloud Doue.

Met un dra gri deuaz ewit ho separi;
Ar plac'h deu da verwell, iaouank ha dizoursi.

Pa well ann den iaouank marw he vestrez fidel,
E em strinkaz 'n ur gouent, e-touez ann dut zantel,

Lec'h ma pede Doue, koulz en noz hag en de,
'N esper gwelt he vestrez, 'vel pa oa en buhe.

Un de m'oa ar c'hloarek en pedenn en he gambr,
Ann Diaoul aparisaz en giz d'un den iaouank.

— Pegement, eme-z-han, a roi-te d'in-me
Wit gwelet da vestrez, 'vel pa oa en buhe? —

— Me a zo ur paour keiz n'am euz ket a voïenn,
N' 'm euz met ur blatinenn c'houezet en aour-melenn;

Nep raï d'in hi gwelet, hep kavet nep ofanz,
hen do ma flatinenn, o ia en asuranz. —

Tapout 'ra krog en-han evel en ur bugel,
Nijell a ra gant-han dreist ann tier uhel.

Arruout a rejont 'n un ale vraz meurbed,
Er penn-all ann-ez-hi un or vraz houarnet.

P'arruaz 'tal ann or, d'ez-han eo digorret,
Dre m'oa euz ann ifern un diaoul inkarnet:

Mont a eure gant-han en ur gambr a goste,
Lec'h m' welaz he vestrez, vel pa oa en buhe;

Laket oe ar c'hloarek a goste en ur gambr,
Lec'h ma wel he vestrez en ur gador ardant.

— Laret d'in, ma mestrez, ha c'hui 'c'h euz aze poan,
Seblantout a ra d'in ez oc'h en kreiz ann tan? —

— Oh! ia sur, eme-z-hi, mad hallet kredi-ze,
Me n'am euz tam repoz nag en noz nag en de. —

— Petra ann traou hudur 'zo ouz ho tiou-skouarn,
Iffom dac'h ho pisaj, ho treid hag ho taouarn? —

— Holl serpanted 'nn ifern am devor de-ha-noz,
N'am euz ket digant-he ur momet a repoz;

Ma zreid ha ma daouarn, ma izili 'samblez,
A zo 'vel un houarn o tont euz ar forniet! —

— Laret d'in, ma mestrez, na ve ket a voïenn
Da dont d'ho delivra a boaniou ann ifern,

Gant iün hag orezon, pedennou mad laret,
Aluzon d'ar baourien, oferniou selebret? —

— Iünou, orezonou, pedennou mad laret,
Na reont met kreski poan un ine daonet. —

— Adieu ta, ma mestrez, pa 'z eo red partia,
C'hoant 'm euz d'ho ambrasi wit ar wes diweza? —

— Salv-ho-kraz, servijer, wit-ze na refet ket,
Rag gant tan ann ifern c'hui a ve sur dewet. —

— Adieu ta, ma mestrez, pa eo red partia,
Me 'rei h' gourc'hemenou d'ho c'hoarik bihanna. —

— Oh ia, ma servijer, oh! ia, na vanket ket,
Grit ma gourc'hemenou, ha deuz ma feurz laret,

Na vo ket familier re gant ar galanted,
Gant aoun, siouas Maria, na ve iwe daonet! —

Appendix 2.2.7. An Ivern

Published by Jean-Marie Penguern

Source: Penguern, Jean-Marie. Dastumad Penwern. Rennes: Dastum, 1983. pp. 48–49.

Eun de pa voand o pourmen e pourmen assamblez
ag int e tond a parlant deus ar briadelez.

mez siwas eun toll kruel a ra an disparti
ar plac'h a deu da vervel iaouank a dissouci.

eun den man p'an deus klevet voa mare he vestres fidel
en eum lakez er gouant e mesk an dud Santel

hag henon pede Doue noz a de
evid ma velje choas e vestrez evel pa voa en bue.

eun nozvez voa en he velle kousket mad
hag e teuas eur messajer evid-dond d'he kerhad

— Petra roïd-de dime ia en assuranc
me a rei did goëled da vestrez eb na droug nag offenc

— me zo eur paour kez kabuçin ne meus ket a voïen
nemed eur blatinen arc'hand lived en aour melen
ag a roïn me dide ia en assuranc
mar gres din goëllet va mestrez eb na droug nag offenc

kregi a eure enan neuze eb dalle pel
a nijeal a re gantan dreïst an tie huel

harruchont en eun alle ag a voa hir meurbet
ag er pen all anizi eun or vras ouarnet.

Dre ar nerz deus e gomzou an or a zigor promptamant
pelec'h edo e vestrez! en eur gadeur ardant!

— Debonjour d'eoc'h va mestres c'houi o-c'heus poan aman
Seblantout a ra dime e maoc'h e kreiz an tan

— ia sur va chervicher, poan vras a souffran aman
an tan dimeus an ivern ne cess dam devoran.

C'houi rei va gourhemennou dam c'har ar zo er ger chomet
ag e leverot dezi beza fur a parfait.

Appendix 2.2.8. (Penneres ar Wouern)

Published by Jean-Marie Penguern

Source: Penguern, Jean-Marie. *Dastumad Penvern*. Rennes: Dastum, 1983. pp. 308-310.

Merc'het yauank, en gouirione
Mert d'unan ma ret promesse.

an ini rei da daou pe dri
A iel dan ifern da leskiñ.

an ini rei da dri pe pewart
a vo danvnet hep e nep mar.

a vo deus Doue distag a gren
Evel eur scour deus eur woën.

En en dont deus al leur newe
Me a moa groet seis promesse

Seis promesse e moa me groet
Kerkouls mije groet an eisvet.

Da seis den yauank a moa touet
Kemerjent a ne wit pried.

Yan Gornek wa bars em genou
C'hober widon promesseou.

Pa wa gant en hent o vonet
Eu(r) c'havalier deus rancontret.

— Plac'hek yauank, dime leret,
Tresek pet bro velse e c'het?

— Me ia breman da Wengamp
Da brenan 'n allianç arc'hant.

A neuse dabrenan eur ruban:
Ganac'h, cavalier, so unan.

— ma ruban o po mar keret
mar keret bean ma fried

Bean groek dime ewit mad
hag hen sinan din gant ho goad.

sinan din gant eur benduen
E vefet din ewit biken.

— Plijoud 'wallac'h ra ho feñon
Chetu ase ma dorn, mignon.

ha dillun gentan mar keret
Otro kabiten vo hon eured

Eis kemener a so em zi
O c'hober eun habit newe diñ.

Arc'hoas martese a vo nao
Red vro d'ho kroëk bean faro.

Penneres ar Woern a levere
Er ger de douç pa narië:

— Deus gane duman dar jardin
d'ober eur boket louzou fin.

— Merc'hek yauank, ma escuset
Dar jardin ganac'h man nin ket

Rag ar jardin so biniget
ha c'hui ha me, niñ na nomp ket.

Er jardin so eul louzouen
Zo c'hano Jesus war he fen.

hano Jesus so war he fen,
hano Mari war he dellien.

— Ma mam, mes aoun c'hon market
komer hennes evit pried

He visaic'h blij din awallac'h
Mes he dreid so vel treit eur marc'h.

— Laret moa dac'h, ma merchek koant,
choas eur pried herve ho c'hoant.

Tolet plê pe choaset unan
ho kañfe da lesquiñ dan tan.

Pa nantreent dre an hor vras
An dud a eured awa flambras.

Dre m'antreent bars an ilis
Te n'ho c'herec'hen eur vrmen vris.

ben n'arujont d'ar balustrou
E waint ho daou du evel glaou.

Er beleg yauank a c'houlene
deus Penneres ar Wouern neuse:

— Merc'hek yauank, dime leret,
Petra ganac'h so ariet?

Petra ganac'h so ariet,
Du ho kavan vel er pec'het.

— Belek yauank, mar em c'heret
Er stoll em c'herec'hen a lekefet,

me sant er vero bars em esquern

Mes aouen c'hon a vont dan ifern.

me sant an tan em daoulagad
a c'han da dêvin kik ha goad.

N'wa ket er gir peurachuet
An douar d'ho treit so diorret,

seiz leo tro rond a we cleowet
gant eun drous effroyab meurbet

We cleowet penneres ar Wouern
O koean 'n fons puns an ifern.

Appendix 2.2.9. An aer wiber

Published by Jean-Marie Penguern

Source: Penguern, Jean-Marie. Dastumad Penwern. Rennes: Dastum, 1983. pp. 312-315.

Ter nos zo na kouskis banac'h
na ken eubed na rin enoas

nag o chillaou eun aer wiber
o kanan war bod er rinvier

a ma lavar d(r)e e c'hibouan
nan eus promesse mert unan

An ini rai an daou an tri
a iel dan ivern da leski

an ini raï an tri pevar
a vo damnet perpetual

o vo deus doue distak kren
evel eur brank deus eur voën

eun nos o tond deus eul leur newe
me moa groet seiz promesse.

Achu an eizvet kent an de
touet dan eil evel de guile.

seiz promesse am boa groet
Ab an an den achuë an eisvet

Ab an achui an eizvedo
Jan gorniek a voa e(m) c'heno

Penerez ar guern a lavare
Ebars ar guer pa arrie

Pachik emei ma fach bien
c'hwi zo diligent a buen

Dibit tu din ma incane
ewit ma in da Wengamp fete

Nag ewit ma c'hin da Wengamp
Da choas eun diamant arc'hant

pa voa gant an hent o vonet
eur c'havalier yaouank an deus rencontrer

Merc'hik yaouank dime leret
Pelec'h e hed a ne zoc'h bed

Pelec'h e hed a ne zoc'h bed
pe man en o esper monet

Nag e han duman da Wengamp
da choas eun diamant arc'hant

A neuze da choas eur ruban
ganech cavalier zo unan

Cheus med sinan gant o goad
E vefed dime evid mad

Neuz med sinan gant o penduen
E vefed dime a virviken

a c'hi ag o sinan dean gant e c'hoad
e viche dean evid mad

ag i o sinan dean gant e venduen
e viche dean a viken

evid a gorf ag a visach
e pliget dime awoalc'h
mes o dreid zo vel treid eur marc'h

Merc'hik yaouank ma excuset
ma zad a ma mam no devoa ked

na ma choarezet ken eubed.

Dirio kenta e vo ma euret
Me o ped kavalier da donnet.

Bichen pedet pe ne vijen ked
Penerez arriet a ri en o heuret

triwoac'h kemener zo em zi
Ober eun abit nevez di

ag ar c'hoas e vezo nao
Onnez kavalier a vezo brao

Penerez a wern a lavare
e bars er guer pa n'arrie

Deud ganin kavalier dar jardin
Da ober eur boket a louzou fin

Merc'h yaouank ma excuset
e wid dar jardin me na nin ked

Rag ar jardin zo biniget
a c'hwi a me ne non mi ked

er jardin zo eul louzouen
zo ano Jezuz war e fen

ano Jezuz war e fen
ano Mari war e delien

Penerez ar Wern a lavare
er guer de mam pa arrie

c'hwi ma mam poa laret din
Pa vichen dimeet eureuji

mes c'hwi ma zad c'hwi na poa ked
ken koulz a me c'hwi zo damnet

C'hwi poa laret dime choas unan vesk kant
na bete ma choazfen ma c'hoant

A breman meus choazet unan
Da vont gantan da kreis an tan

pa he penerez ar vern deus ar ger
e voa brao e vel eul fouldrizer

E dre ma tostee dan auter
E he du evel eul lucifer

E be ma tostee dan oter vras
e he du evel eur mortuas

ar belek yaouank a houlene
Deus penerez ar Wern ag an de ce

Merc'hik yaouank dime leret
Pera ganec'h zo arriet
Rag liou ar pec'het a douget

Beleg iaouank ma n'em c'heret
ar stoll em c'herc'hen a leket

Leket ar stoll em c'herc'hen
han da koean er puns an ivern.

Dallet soner ma goalen a ma chapelet
Mil boan a reont dam speret
ag et dar guer leret dam zad
e man aman e skabel troadet mad

Seiz leo tro rond pe woar dro
e woe klevet penerez ar vern
o koea er puns an ivern.

Appendix 2.2.10. An hini oa et da velet e vestrez d'an ifern

Collected by Canon Besco

Source: Pérennès, Henri. "Chansons populaires de la Basse-Bretagne". *Annales de Bretagne* vol. 45 (1938). pp. 212-217.

Chilaouet e klefviet, e klefviet kanan
Eur zonik koant a neve bet zavet an bla man
Zo gret da daou den iaouank en em gare parfet;
Pa n'em garent ar muian, eman bet separet.

Ar maro a arruaz, ar maro ken kri,
A lac'haz ar femelen iaouank ha dizoursi;
An den iaouank pa velaz maro e vestrez fidel,
An'em dennaz d'ar gouent, e mesk an dud santel.

En em dennaz d'ar gouent evit pedi Doue
Ma nize guelt e vestrez, velt ma oa n'hi bue.
Eun de e oa e pedi, e pedi en e gamp
Hag hen e velet eun ael e kiz eun den iaouank.

— Laret-hu din ma mignon, peter a rofes te
Evit guelet da vestrez, velt ma oa n'hi bue
Na meuz met eur blantinen c'huezet en aour melen
'Nhani rei din c'hi guelet, no c'hi a dra certen.

Hag en e kregoel n'he dorn elt e dorn eur bugel
En kas gantan dreist ar gwe ha d'an tier uhel
Ken oa arru 'n eun ale, oa hir, ledan meurbet
War ar pen all anezan dorejo houarnet.

.....
.....
.....
.....

Lucifer deuz an ifern an euz c'hi digoret.

Hag en e kregel 'nhe dorn, en kass gantan d'ur gambr
Lec'h e vele e vestrez en eur gador ardant
Laret-hu din ma mestrez, na zantet ket a boan?
Herve ha liou, ho feçon, ez oc'h e kreiz an tan.

— Oh ia zur, ma zervifer, gallout a rit kredi
Sarpantet an ifern am divor noz ha de
Na petra-ta, ma mestrez, a deu deuz ho tiousskouarn
Hag a gouc'h d'ac'h ho pizaj, ho treid hag ho taouarn?

— Ma bizaj ha ma daou dorn m'oll vembro assemblez
A zo evelt an houarn ru o tont deuz ar vournez
Arça ta ma mestrez ker, kent evit ho kuitat
Ez c'houlennan c'hoaz eur vech ambrassein ho pizaj.

Salocras, ma zervijer, 'vit se na riet ket
Gant aon a dan an ifern a deufe d'ho poezat;
Ma zervijer, c'houi a ia d'ar ger, me na n'an ket,
Kaset ma gourc'hemennno d'ar ger d'am c'hoarezet.

Lart de vont ket ken fragil andred o galantet
Rak aon a dan an ifern a deufe d'ho voëzat,
Me na n'on ket bet fragil med a andred unan
Betek an de a hiri am euz bet kalz a boan.

Laret-hu d'in, ma mestrez, na ve ket a voien
Dre fors pedo Doue, dont d'ho lemel a boan?
Oh nan, an oll ofernio zakrifisou laket
N'int ket evit diboanio an hini a zo daonet.

[Alternative ending supplied by Le Goff:]

Roit d'in eur bouch, ma mestrez. — Servicher, sal ho kras,
Eur gomz re oc'h eus laret, en ifern 'vec'h arc'hoaz.

It d'ar ger, ma servicher, na lirit ger ebet,
'Barz peder eur varnugent, c'houi vo aman rentet

Mont a ra an den yaouank da di e vam, e dad;
Monet a ra d'e wele, hag hen klanv miserabl.

Petra, ma mab 'c'h eus gwelet, petra oc'h eus klevet,
A gement rafe chagrin, keit 'ma vec'h war ar bed?

Nann, netra n'em eus gwelet, na ken nebeut klevet
A gement rafe chagrin, keit 'ma vin war ar bed.

N'an' Doue pa vin maro, 'bedit ket evidoun,
Ar gloar hag ar vanite 'bedo Doue 'vidoun.

Ar gloar hag ar vanite, ar pec'hejou 'm eus gret
A bedo Doue 'vidoun breman pa 'z oun daonet.

Appendix 2.3. Ar Breur Mager

Appendix 2.3.1. Ar Breur Mager

Published by Théodore Hersart de la Villemarqué

Source: Hersart de la Villemarqué, Théodore. *Barzaz Breiz* = *Chants populaires de la Bretagne*, 8th rep. Paris: Didier, 1883. pp. 163-170.

I

Braoan merc'h dijentil a oa drema tro-war-dro,
Eur plac'hik triouec'h vloa, Gwennolaik he hano.

Maro ann otro koz he diou c'hoar baour, hag he mamm;
Maro holl dud he zi, siouaz d'ei! med he lez-vamm.

True oa he gwelet war dreuzo dor ar maner,
O skuillan daelo dru, hag hi ker reiz ha ker kaer!

O sellet war ar mor, o klask lestr he breur mager,
He holl gonfort er bed, oa he c'hortoz pell amzer;

O sellet war ar mor, o klask lestr he breur-mager;
Achet oa c'houec'h vloa 'ba oa eet kuit deuz ar ger.

— Tec'het tu-hont, ma merc'h, hag it da glask al loened;
Ne eann ked d'ho magan evit chom aze chouket. —

Diou teir heur kent ann de hi oa dihunet gant hi,
Er goan, da c'houean tan, ha skuban peb korn ann ti;

Da vont da gerc'hat dour da feunteun-gwer-ar-c'horred,
Gand eur c'hoz-podik toull hag eur zeillik dizeonet.

Ann noz a oa tenval, ann dour oa bet stravillet
Gant karn marc'h eur marc'heg o tistrei deuz a Naoned.

— Iec'hed mad d'hoc'h plac'hik; ha c'houi a zo dimezet? —
Ha me iaouang ha sod a respontaz: — N'ouzonn ket.

— Ha c'houi zo dimezet leveret d'in, me ho ped.
— Sal-ho-kraz, otro ker, dimezet c'hoaz n'em onn ket.

— Dalet ma gwalen aour, ha d'ho lez-vamm lavaret
'M oc'h dimet d'eur marc'heg o tistrei euz a Naoned;

Gwall c'hoari a zo bet, lahet he floc'hik, du-ze;
Hen tihet he unan er c'hof gand eunn tol kleze;

Benn teir zun ha tri de, ha pa vo deuet da vad,
E teuo d'ar maner, laouen ha skanv, d'ho kerc'hat. —

Hag hi d'ar ger doc'h-tu, ha sellet ouz ar bizo:
Bizou he breur-mager oa gant-hi enn he zorn deo!

II

Achet oa eur zun, ha diou zun, hag ann deirved,
Hag marc'heg iaouank ne oa ket c'hoaz distroet.

— Red eo d'hoc'h dimizi sonjal 'm euz gret em c'halon,
Ha kavet am euz d'hoc'h, ma merc'h, eunn den a feson.

— Sal-ho-kraz, va lez-vamm, 'm euz ker euz a zen e-bed
Med euz ma breur-mager, hag a zo er ger digouet.

Bet am euz digant-han gwalennig aour ma eured,
Ha dont a rei enn-berr laouen ha skanv d'am c'herc'het.

— Gand gwalen hoc'h eured, me ho ped, sarret ho pek,
Pe me dapou euz vaz hag ho tiskoo da breek.

Pe dre gaer, pe dre heg, red a vo d'hoc'h dimizi
Da Jobig Al-loadek, da botrig hor marchosi.

— Da Jobik menargars! mervel rinn gand ar c'hlaç'har!
Ma mamm, ma mammik paour! mar vez c'hoaz war ann douar!

— It d'en em glemm er porz, klemmit kement ma karfet,
Kaer po ober taillo, benn tri de viot dimezet! —

III

Tro mare-ze a iez ar c'hleuzer koz dre ar vro,
Gant-han he gloc'h bihan, o kas kannad ar maro.

— Pedit, eid ann ene zo bet enn otro marc'hek,
Keit eo bet war ar bed eunn den mad ha kalonek,

Ha ma bet gwall tihet er c'hof gand eunn toll kleze,
Enn tu all da Naoned, kreiz eunn emgann braz du-ze.

Warc'hoaz tro ar c'huz heol, e teraouo ann nozvez,
Ha kaset vo goude deuz ann iliz wenn d'he vez. —

IV

— C'houi ia d'ar ger a-bred! — Ma 'z ann dar ger, oh! ia de
— Ne ked achu ar fest, na ken-nebeud ar parde.

— N'onn ked evid herzel grand true am euz out-hi,
O welet ar potr-saoul tal-oc'h-tal gant-hi enn ti.

Endro d'ar plac'hik paour a oele leiz hi c'halon,
Ann holl dud a oele na zoken 'nn otro person;

E iliz ar barrez, beure ma, 'nn holl a wele,
Re iaouang ha re goz, nemed hi lez-vamm na re.

Seul-vui ar zonerien, tont d'ar maner a zone,
Seul-vui he c'honfortec'h, seul-vui he c'halon ranne.

Kaset oe doc'h ann dol er penn-kentan, da goania,
Ne deuz evet banne na debret eunn tamm bara.

Eet int d'he diwiskan d'he lakat enn he gwele,
Strinket deuz he gwalen, roget he seien neve;

Ha kuit mez deuz ann ti, diskabel-kaer, da vale.
Lec'h ma eet da guhet den e-bed na oar doare. —

V

Lahet ann holl c'holo, ha kousket mad tud ann ti;
Ar plac'hik paour dihun, lec'h-all, ann derzien gant-hi.

— Na piou a zo aze? — Me, Nola, da vreur-mager.

— Te a zo aze, te! Te eo, te, ma breurik ker! —

Hag hi da lamm er mez, ha kuit war lost he varc'h gwenn,
He brec'hig endro d'ean, enn he c'haonze dreon he gein.

— Ni ia buhan, ma breur! Kant leo hon euz gret me gred!
Plijadur m'euz gen-oud m'am euz-me bet war ar bed.

Pell ma c'hoaz ti da vamm? me garfe bean digouet.
— Dalc'h mad, ato, ma c'hoar, vo ket pell vimp erruet. —

Ar gaouen a dec'he, o ioual tre, dirag-he,
Kouls hag al loened gwez, gand ann trouz a oa gant-he.

— Da varc'h a zo ker reiz; da harnez a zo ken skler!
Me gav anoud kresket eunn tamm mad, ma breur mager!

Me gav anoud ken drant; pellik ma c'hoaz da vaner?
— Dalc'h mad ato, ma choar; pelloc'h e tigueemp er ger.

— Da galon a zo ien, ha da vleao a zo glebet,
Da galon ha da zorn; me gred e teuz anouet.

— Dalc'h mad ato, ma c'hoar; setu ni tostik meurbet,
Na glevez ket moez skiltr sonerien drant hon eured? —

N'oa ked he gomz laret, he varc'h war zao a jomaz,
Ha dridal a reaz, hag a-boez penn c'houirinaz;

Hag he 'nn eunn enezen, kalz tud enn hi o tansal;
Potred ha merc'hed koant, dorn ha dorn, enn eur vragal;

Ha gwe glaz tro-war-dro hi karget a avalo,
Hag ann heol o sevel adreon war ar meneio;

Hag eur feunteunik skler 'tont d'ann traon gand ar gwazio;
Anaon oc'h eva, hag o tont adarre beo;

Mamm Gwennola gant-ho, hag he diou c'hoar war eunn dro.
C'hoari awalc'h eno, sonio ha iouadenno.

VI

Antronoz, d'ar zao heol, merc'hed iaouang a gase
Korf glan Gwennolaik deuz ann iliz wenn d'ar be.

Appendix 2.3.2. (Pe ie ar plarkik iaouank...)

Collected by Théodore Hersart de la Villemarqué

Source: Laurent, Donatien. *Aux Sources du Barzaz-Breiz: La mémoire d'un peuple*. Douarnenez: ArMen, 1989. pp. 50-51.

Pe iè ar plarkik iaouank da fenten davit dour
ai eè hi douc'ik cloarec ractall eus he sicour

ha disicour ha da c'horon hi ficheradik dour.

ha iè monet da zispac'h didan an bout laurè
a pe asaven eus a sè ouien dare deus o doare

aiè didan eur bot spenn guen
hag en eun droadik ar rosen kreiz ar fleurdelysen,

me ia broman dan naonet da porsui ma studi,
hen doue me mestres reit eun dra benak d'hé.

ha iè monet di chacot a rei dehan kant skoet
hag eur coupl ar mouchoueriou hag a peder rochet.

ha ben a nao mis goudè voa bet eur vugale
a hee mont da scriou eull liser déon an dro adarè

— hion à mont da lakat dezhi voar cornik ar lliser
lar dezhi a oa dimeset deur vochises eus ar gher

— heurvat da dendi yaouank vont da guitat e vro,
mar gav ket e chanc en tu man en tu all a garo

pe oa ar plahi yaouank en gher gant he foeniou
emetè ar cloarek yaouank toul an nour e chilaou

mar pige laret bergeren eur gilveden benach
biscoas james ho pugale n'emfont anaet ho sat.

Appendix 2.3.3. (Neus ket e bars en bed...)

Collected by Théodore Hersart de la Villemarqué

Source: Laurent, Donatien. *Aux Sources du Barzaz-Breiz: La mémoire d'un peuple*. Douarnenez: ArMen, 1989. p. 84.

Neus ket e bars en bed,
guassorch evit eur vasles,
Diou ter eur deus en dé
de feunten evit dour,
evenn casset gant he,

De nous e meté du, en dour e mede troublet
ga mab eur cavalour e tistrou eus a noenet.
Digoret tu parlant me reio d'or pem cant scoet
eur vialenic aour ac eur bijou alaouret
Ben en dé ben pem bloa me ielo do guellet
a me cassé ghenè.

Appendix 2.3.4. Ar Plac'h Hi Daou Bried (gwes kenta)

Published by François-Marie Luzel

Source: Luzel, François-Marie. *Gwerzjou Breiz-Izel*. Vol. 1. Lorient: É. Corfmat, 1868. pp. 266-268.

Pa 'z een me da vouit dour da feunteunn 'r Waz-c'halek,
Ha me ' rankontr unan gwisket en ru-skarlek.

Hag hen 'c'houl' diganin: — Plac'h, ha c'hui ' zo dimet? —
Allas! me oa iaouank, hag laret na oann ket.

Hag hen d'am c'hass gant-han da dall ur boud-c'halek,
Ha ma derc'hell eno 'n toulad da varvallet....

— Me am euz ul lez-vamm, ar wasa ' zo ganet,
Ha p'arruinn er ger, me a vo gourdrouzet. —

— Lavaret d'ho lezvamm, ar gwas a ' zo ganet:
Ar feunteun a zo pell, ann dour ' oa strawillet;

Ar feunteun a zo pell, ann dour oa strawillet,
Gant marc'h ur c'havalier 'tistreñ euz ann Naonet.... —

II

Pa oann en Keridon, en Keridon, ' tonet,
Me a glewe ur vouez ' oa dili a bec'het;

Ar zonerienn o soon, ' soon da dut ann eured,
Ha me ' porsu ma marc'h, o sonjal bout abred;

Ha me porsu ma marc'h, o sonjal bout abred,
Allas! pa arruiz, oant et kazi d' gousket.

— Digorrit d'in ho tor, plac'hik diou-wes eureujet,
Ann awell a zo kriz, ma daou-dorn ' zo klezret;

Ann awell a zo kriz, ma daou-dorn ' zo klezret,
O terc'hell brid ma marc'h ha ma c'hleze alaouret. —

— It-c'hui da Geridon, eno c'hui vo lojet,
Warc'hoas, pa vezo de, me iel ' di d'ho kwelet,

Hag a gasso dac'h lod euz a fest ma eured,
Ur c'hartier a gik-maout, un'-all a gefelek;

Ur c'hartier a gik-maout, un'-all a gefelek,
Hag ur banne gwin Spagn, da dorri ho sec'het. —

— N'eo ket se ' c'houlennann, plac'h diou-wes eureujet,
Digorrit d'in ho tor, ma daou-dorn ' zo klezret;

Digorrit d'in ho tor, ma daou-dorn ' zo klezret;
O terc'hell brid ma marc'h ha ma c'hleze alaouret.

Digasset am euz d'ac'h ar pezh 'm boa prometet,
Ur gegeliad gloan-Spagn, hi daou-benn alaouret.

Digorrit d'in ho tor, plac'h diou-wes eureujet,
Me am boa klasket d'ac'h ho kwalenn genta ' eured;

Sellit ho piz-bihan, ho hini en tu-deou,
Hag ' teufet d'am c'hredi p' larinn gwirionezou. —

Pa zell hi biz-bihan, da em gonsideri:
— Oh! ia sur, c'hui ez eo, deuit raktall en til!.... —

Appendix 2.3.5. Ar Plac'h Hi Daou Bried (eil gwes)

Published by François-Marie Luzel

Source: Luzel, François-Marie. *Gwerzjou Breiz-Izel*. Vol. 1. Lorient: É. Corffmat, 1868. p. 270.

Ann dersien ' zo ganin a euz ma gwall-aozet.
— Mar karfeac'h dibri boued goude ' pe hi c'hrenet;

Mar karfeac'h dibri boued goude ' pe hi c'hrenet,
Krenvoc'h ' ve ho kalon da stourmi euz 'r c'hlenved. —

— Me am euz ul lezvamm hag a zo kriz meurbet,
Diou, ter heur ' rok ann de, siouas! me ' ve zavet;

Diou, ter heur ' rok ann de, siouas! me ' ve zavet,
Da vont da gerc'had dour da feunteun 'r Waz-c'halek.

Ann noz a oa gwall-du, ann dour ' oa strawillet,

Gant marc'h ur c'havalier o tont euz ann Naonet:

Hag hen ' c'houll diganin : — Plac'hik, ha c'hui 'zo dimet? —
Ha me oe sot a-walc'h da laret na oann ket.

Hag hen kregi em dorn, m' c'hass gant-han d' 'r valanek,
Lakad d'in war ma barlenn un daou pe dri c'hant skoed;

Lakad d'in war ma barlenn un daou pe dri c'hant skoed,
Ur mouchouar koton, ur walenn alaouret:

— It-c'hui d'ar ger, plac'hik, da laret 'z oc'h dimet,
A-benn seiz vloaz ama me deui c'hoaz d'ho kwelet. —

II

— Pa oann en Keridon m' mestres, ' tont d'ho kwelet,
Me a glewe sklezr-mad sonerrienn ho eured.

Digorrit d'in ho tor, plac'hik newez-eureujet,
Brid ma marc'h ' zo torret, ma fajik ' zo kollet. —

— N' digorrinn ket ma dor d'ac'h na da zen a-bed,
Me ' zo aman kousket euz koste ma fried;

Me ' zo aman kousket euz koste ma fried,
Ha mar hen dishunvann, on sur bout skandelet.... —

P' oa digorret ann or, alumet ar goulaoù,
Eno sur a rannas ho c'halonou ho daou!

Appendix 2.3.6. Gwerz Eur Plac'h Iaouank Touellet

Collected by Alfred Bourgeois

Source: Bourgeois, Alfred. *Kanaouennoù Pobl*, Paris, 1959. p. 73.

M'em ma bet eul lezvamm na n'euz hini oar ar bed
Ter heur arog an dé gand hi e vijen savet
Da vond da gerhat dour d'ar feunteun a Wazsavet

Pa'n arriz tal an dour ar feunteun oa strafuillet
Gand mab eun dijentil o abeuri hé gézec
Hag hev goul digané ha mé a oa dimezet
He mé oa plac'h iaouang, é respontiz ne oan ket

Hag hev tap krop em dorn d'am c'has da eur valannec
Hag em lakat ennoñ da sellet ouz ar stered
Pa zaviz ac'hané, ha mé commanz de welañ
Otro Doué mé-vé, pera m'euz kollet amañ

Cheteu aze pemp kant skoet pere am euz kavet
Kavet war an hend braz pa oan d'ar ger o tonet.
Biwiken ne gavin ' pezh am euz amañ kollet.

Terip ta! va mestrez, ho kavout a ran chañset
Boé ar wech diwehañ ' moé an inor d'ho kwelet
Dumañ zo manet gwin boe eizet ma meronez
Ha ma kered evañ, me gaso d'ac'h ma mestrez

Gwell ve dign evañ dour euz ar feunteun Wazsavet
Vid evañ gwin cleret gand ' hini ne garan ket!

Appendix 2.3.7. *Feunteun ar Wasc'halek*

Collected by François-Marie Luzel

Source: Guillourel, Éva. *La complainte et la plainte : Chanson, justice, cultures en Bretagne (XV^e-XVIII^e siècles)*. Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2010. pp. 142–3.

Me am euz ul lesvamm 'r gwassa m'oufac'h da gavet,
Ter heur a-rok ann de gant-hi me ve zavet
ha kasset da vouit dour da feunteun ar Wasc'halek
P'arruis 'tal ar feunteun, ma fichet anter-garget,
ha me 'klewet ur vouez hag a oa deliberet
Gant paotr un denjentil o abreuvi hi ronsed. —

Hag hen o kregi em dorn, ma c'hass gant-han d'ar valanek,
'Lakad ma daou-lagad da zellet euz ar stered
Hag hi re he-unan da zellet ar merc'hed.
Pa deuis ac'hane, hag hen rei d'in kant skoed
Da vezur ma bugel, 'vel pa vije ganet
— Me 'm euz ul lezvammik, 'r gwasan oufac'h da gavet,
Pa arruin er ger, me 'vo gant-hi gourdrouzet
— Pa arrufet er ger, mar veac'h gant-hi gourdrouzet,
M'ho ped da laret d'ezhi 'po kâd ar feunteun troublet,
Gant paotr un den-jentil o abreuvi he ronsed

P'oa arruet er ger, ez oa gant-hi gourdrouzet
Taolet emeas an ti, gant hi lezvamm milliget

Ac'hane hi 'zo et na da di hi maerones,
Da di Itron ar Genkiz, hi 'zo bet aliès.....

Itron ar Genkiz a laras un derves d'hi mates: —
— Terrupl eme-z-hi na ho kavann drouk-liwet,
Pa arrujac'h em zi, n' dougac'h ket al liou-man,

Kontrol a ret d'ar roz a zo er jardinou,

Ar ieod bars ar prajou a deu da gomanz glazan —
— Perag, ma maerones, n'am c'havfac'h ket drouk-liwet,
Pa'z on gant ann derrienn pewar miz zo tremenet (bis
ar pistik hag ar paaz, ann tri zra-se ma laz. —
— Petra ta, Jaketa, na poa ket d'in laret,
a vijenn et en kêr da glask medesined (bis)
Jaketa ar Penkoad, hag ho dije ho kwellad ? —
— Tawet, maeronezik, ha n'am c'haketet ket,
Kloaregik ann aotro 'zo kiriek d'am c'hlenved. —
ann itron ar Genkiz, o klewet hi freposio,
a deuz kasset lizer da gloarek ann aotro,
— Jaketa ar Benc'hoad a glewann a zo gwallet
C'hui 'renk hi eureuji, pe beza forbanet,
Pe dont da guitaad ho pro, elec'h na retornfet ket. —
— Me 'zo ur c'hloarek iaouank, prest da veza bèlek,
Itron, mar laret-se, setu me glac'haret
Paj-bihan ann aotro hag hi 'zo mignoned.
ann dez-all oant er jardinn o torri kraou da zebri,
hi fenn war hi varlenn, hag hen euz hi c'haressi
Ann itron ar Genkiz, o klewet he breposiou,
a deus skrivet lizer da bajik ann aotro.
Jaketa ar Benc'hoad a glewann 'zo gwallet,
C'hui renk hi eureuji, pe veza forbanizet
Pe dont da guitaad ho pro, elec'h na retornfet ket. —
— Me 'zo ur paj-bihan, newez deut euz ann arme,
Itron, mar laret-se, me zo prest da vont arre —
Pa oa gret ann dimizi, hag iwe ann eured,
Paj bihan ann aotro adarre 'zo partiet —

Setu seiz vloaz tremenet, ann eiz vloaz achuet,
 Jaketa ar Penc'hoad adarre 'zo dimezet,
 Paj bihan ann aotro er gèr n'arrue ket.....
 — Pa oann en Keridon war geñ ma marc'h o tonet,
 Ha me klewet ur vouez a oa deliberet
 Gant meur a sonerrienn dimeuz taol ann eured. —
 — Digorret d'in ho tor, plac'hik diou-wes eureujet,
 Arru on d' digass d'ac'h ar pezh ho poa goulennet
 ur gegel a gorz-Spagn, hag ur c'hleze alaouret
 — Ha me a zo aman euz koste ma fried,
 Ma rafenn re a vrud, marteze 'venn skandalet
 — Digorret d'in ho tor, plac'hik diou-wes eureujet ... —
 Digorret d'in ho tor, plac'hik diou-wes eureujet,
 Ma daoudorn 'zo klezret — o terc'hell brid ma marc'h ha ma c'hleze alaouret
 — 'hann da digorrinn ann or, pa dlefenn beza lazeta,
 Pa glewann laret è c'hui ez è ma c'henta pried. —
 Ann or pe deuz digorret, en hi gerc'henn è lampet,
 Etre hi ziouvrec'h è marwet! —

ur mellow a oa gant-han, Pier lareur anez-han,
 — Pier, ma mellow, sent ouzinn, — Dâl ma c'hleze,
 ha gra ouzinn! — setu aze ma arc'hant, ha ma
 holl akoutramant, — Kerz d'ar gèr, ha lar d'am
 c'heront — e vinn marwet er rejimant!
 — N'am euz ket ar galon d'ho lazan,
 Abalamour m'ho servijan,
 'R galon d'ho lazan n'am bo ket,
 Balamour m'em eus ho servijet. —
 N'oa ket ar gèr peurlavaret,
 Ar paj bihan zo desedet, —
 Setu un intaon iaouank ann de kentan he eured!